MONDAY
July 29, 2024

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

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RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 55 • No. 180

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

FRESH FACES

President appoints Governors in 9 States

NEWS » PAGE 13

RELIEF FOR FARMERS

CITES eases export of agarwood from India

NEWS » PAGE 14

EXPANDING FOOTPRINT

UltraTech Cement to acquire India Cements

NEWS » PAGE 12

MULTIFACETED APPROACH

Care models for mental illness, homelessness

Support measures require a radical shift

EDITORIAL » PAGE 10

TOUGH OPENER

Nikhat overcomes Kloetzer's challenge

SPORT » PAGE 18

Manu's historic bronze opens India's medal hunt

The 22-year-old is the first Indian woman shooter to be on the Olympic podium as she wins medal in the 10m air pistol event; she will now compete in 10m pistol mixed team and 25m pistol events

Jonathan Selvaraj
PARIS

The trailblazer: Manu Bhaker celebrates with her bronze medal in women's 10 metre air pistol at the Paris Olympics, in the Chateauroux shooting range, on Sunday. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Three years ago, Manu Bhaker broke down in tears at the conclusion of a dismal campaign at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics where she finished medalless across three events.

On Sunday at Chateauroux, the 22-year-old, who is competing at her second Olympics, wiped away tears from her eyes once again. This time though they were of joy following the conclusion of the women's 10m air pistol event where she won a bronze medal, opening India's medal count at the Paris 2024 Games.

The medal was also the first won by an Indian woman shooter.

After qualifying for the final in third place, Manu hit the ground running. Of the 22 shots she took, just 7 were in the '9' ring.

She was never out of medal contention and was in silver medal place until her final shot of the competition where she was pipped by the narrowest of margins – 0.1 – by South Korea's Kim Yeji.

Another Korean Ye Jin Oh took gold.

Manu isn't done just yet. She will also be competing in the women's 10m pistol mixed team event on Monday and the women's 25m pistol events later in the competition.

MORE REPORTS
» PAGE 17

Congress govt. scaring away investors from State: Nirmala

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Accusing the State government of driving away investors from Karnataka, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said the government's policies had driven the rate of inflation in the State above the national average.

"Because of the worsening law and order situation, industries are scared and they want to get out. I do not want to take the names of companies that are going out," she told presspersons here in a rebuttal to the allegations that Karnataka and many other States have been slighted in the recently presented Union Budget.

Ms. Sitharaman said: "Karnataka is facing high inflation which is above the national average. The rate of inflation between June 2023 and June 2024 in Karnataka was 6.1%, much higher than the national average of 5.4%. The rate of inflation in Karnataka between June 2022 and May 2023, before the Congress came to power was 5.3%, lower than the national average of 6%."

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addressing a press conference in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Karnataka's inflation was higher than national average between May 2023 and June 2024, she says

Blaming the State government's actions as responsible for spiking up the inflation, she said: "Petrol and diesel prices were hiked by about ₹3 and ₹3.5 a litre, respectively, and milk price has gone up. The property guidance value has gone up from 25% to 30%, the stamp duty has increased by 200% to 500%, vehicle registration fee has gone up by 3%, and an additional 10% lifetime tax has been imposed on EVs."

Inflation, the Finance Minister said, "is naturally higher than the national average due to these factors. The revenue deficit is high, capital expenditure is not happening or happening less. If you don't invest in capital expenditure, employment will not come to Karnataka, and the demand and consumption will also not increase."

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 2
RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 6

NEARBY

BJP-JD(S) to take out padayatra from August 3

BENGALURU
The NDA allies BJP and JD(S) will take out a seven-day padayatra from Bengaluru to Mysuru from August 3 against the alleged scam in site distribution by MUDA and financial irregularities in the Valmiki corporation. » Page 6

BBMP likely to go in for twin-tube tunnel roads

BENGALURU
The BBMP finds construction of twin-tube tunnel roads more feasible than single-tube tunnels along north-south and east-west high dentistry corridors in the city. » Page 2

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGES 19 & 20

New job schemes to kick off soon: Somanathan

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

> We have tried to make sure the coverage of the employment-linked incentive schemes is, as far as possible, widespread, and not tried to make technological, sectoral choices
>
> **T.V. SOMANATHAN**
> Finance Secretary

The Union government is confident of launching the schemes in the Prime Minister's package for employment and skilling, which were announced in last week's Budget, within this financial year.

The schemes include an internship programme for one crore youth in 500 top companies whose design details will be worked out in consultation with the industry, Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan said on Sunday.

"We expect all of these schemes to start off within this financial year... We have tried to make sure the coverage of the employment-linked incentive schemes is, as far as possible, widespread, and not tried to make technological, sectoral choices. While Schemes A and C are for all industries, Scheme B is for manufacturing jobs," Mr. Somanathan told *The Hindu*.

The Finance Secretary also said that the decision to incentivise hiring for first-timers with a salary limit of ₹1 lakh a month had been aimed at keeping the schemes sector-neutral.

"I agree ₹1 lakh is high, but it is not so if you are trying to cover the hiring of people with sophisticated skills, or knowledge of AI [Artificial Intelligence]," he said, adding that the schemes could spur new jobs in areas under threat from the advent of technologies like AI.

Referring to the recent tendency of large tech companies to defer joining dates for fresh recruits, the Secretary said that it was precisely for this reason that the government did not want to exclude such people.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

'Centre will deliver on promises to A.P., Bihar'

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The Centre is confident of delivering on its promise to help develop Andhra Pradesh's capital by external financing, and arrange funds for capex in Bihar, Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan says.

FULL INTERVIEW
» PAGE 13

Not all require tax clearance certificate to go abroad: govt.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

After outrage over a Union Budget proposal making it mandatory to get tax clearance certificates for going abroad, the government on Sunday said only those accused of financial irregularities or having huge tax arrears needed them.

"The proposed amendment does not require all the residents to obtain the tax clearance certificate," the Finance Ministry said in a statement. The Ministry, in the Finance Bill, has proposed to add the reference of the Black Money Act, 2015, to the list of Acts under which any person should clear his liabilities to obtain the certificate.

The Ministry said the Income Tax Department, through a 2004 notification, had specified that the certificate may be required only in case of serious financial irregularities and investigation of cases under the Income Tax or Wealth Tax Act requiring a person's presence and leading to a tax demand, or if a person has direct-tax arrears exceeding ₹10 lakh, which have not been stayed.

The department said a person could be asked to get the certificate only after recording the reasons.

Centre scraps auction of three critical mineral blocks

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Centre has scrapped the auction of three critical mineral blocks as there were fewer bidders than expected. The auction is part of the Centre's push towards self-reliance in critical mineral supplies.

The blocks are the Salal-Haimna lithium, titanium and bauxite block in Jammu and Kashmir, Muskaniya-Gareriatola-Barwari potash block in Jharkhand and Kurunjakulam graphite block in Tamil Nadu. "The auction was annulled as the required number of bids under the rules have not been received," said a Mines Ministry notice.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

Two arrested a day after three IAS aspirants drown in Delhi basement

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

A day after three Civil Services aspirants drowned in the basement of a private coaching centre, the Delhi Police on Sunday arrested its coordinator and the building owner, and booked them for culpable homicide. The accused have been sent to judicial custody for 14 days.

The deceased have been identified as Shreya Yadav, 25, from Uttar Pradesh; Tanya Soni, 25, a resident of Telangana; and Nevin Dalvin, 28, from Kerala, the police said.

Senior police officers said the basement was around eight feet below ground level and more than 20 students were present inside it on Saturday evening. While the basement gate was closed, it got damaged after water gushed in at a high pressure, an officer said.

Security personnel stand guard near the UPSC exam coaching centre in New Delhi, where three people drowned on Saturday. PTI

Mayor Shelly Oberoi said Rau's IAS Study Circle had been running a library in the basement in violation of the law.

"It was said that a drain passing in front of the building burst, and like a flash flood, water entered the basement and the students got trapped," Ms. Oberoi told presspersons.

She and an official of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, however, said none of the other buildings next to the centre had faced flooding.

Later, the Corporation said in a statement, "The so-called bursting of drainage outside the coaching centre is not conclusive and the matter is under investigation."

Students stage protest

Since morning, students from coaching institutes and residential complexes have been protesting against the negligence that caused the deaths.

The Mayor ordered "immediate" action against all coaching centres running commercial activities in basements against the rules. The Corporation sealed the basements of Rau's IAS Study Circle and 13 other coaching institutes, the Mayor said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

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PTI

Pant is the real deal, never mind his occasional dalliance with ordinariness

With Indian cricket on the throes of transition across formats, Pant is the bridge between the glorious past and the exciting future; he is only 26, but a mature, experienced, seasoned campaigner who has literally stared the afterlife in the face and come back to tell the tale

R. Kaushik
PALLEKELE

He looked like Rishabh Pant, he answered to the name Rishabh Pant, but for more than a half-hour at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium on Saturday night, it appeared as if an impostor had taken his place. There was none of the characteristic ebullience, no muscling of the ball, no electric running between the wickets, no shape as he tried to hit the cover off the ball. Rishabh Pant sleepwalked through his innings, unable to build on the hectic start provided by Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill, struggling to sail in the wake of his marauding skipper Suryakumar Yadav.

Even the singles weren't readily forthcoming and his first shot in semi-anger nearly proved his undoing. Walking across to Maheesh Theekshana to shovel-sweep, he was put down by Asitha Fernando at long-leg, the ball trickling away to the boundary and throwing him a lifeline. That didn't energise him either. When Suryakumar was dismissed for an outrageous 58 in the first Twenty20 International against Sri Lanka, Pant had contributed just 16 off 17 deliveries in a third-wicket association worth 76.

What on earth was going on? Where was the acclaimed destroyer of bowling attacks? Where was the intrepid batter who thought little of going down on his haunches and smiting the ball behind square on the on-side, ending up on his backside even as the little orb sailed over the boundary ropes? Where was the gathering force that could crunch the ball through the off-side with such ferocity that even five yards was too much for the boundary-rider to cover? Where was Rishabh Pant?

Lying in wait, as it transpired. Having thrown him one lifeline as a fielder, Fernando handed Pant another gift - a juicy full toss that was disdainfully whipped over mid-wicket for six. From 20 off 23, Pant had moved to 26 off 24. A false dawn, or the start of a late charge? The next ball provided an emphatic answer - another full toss, this time clattered over point for four.

By the time he was dismissed by the excellent Matheesha Pathirana in the penultimate over, Pant had leapfrogged to 49 off 33. He had more than caught up with balls faced, blasting 29 off his final 10 deliveries. There he was, the Rishabh Pant the cricketing world has come to love and admire. And envy and fear if one isn't an Indian fan.

With Indian cricket on the throes of transition across formats, Pant is the bridge between the glorious past and the exciting future. He is only 26, but a mature, experienced, seasoned 26 who has literally stared the afterlife in the face and come back to tell the tale. With nearly 140 international caps against his name, he is the consummate all-format player, his unabashed ball-striking complemented by his excellent glovework that isn't quite steeped in orthodoxy but that is also not as unconventional as Mahendra Singh Dhoni's.

Pant has chosen his mentor and role model well. For nearly a decade and a half, Dhoni was Indian cricket's go-to option, first as a long-maned free-flowing batter who hit the ball the proverbial country mile and brought smarts to his wicketkeeping, then as captain fantastic who pulled non-existent rabbits out of imaginary hats, and finally as the mature, understated senior statesman who pulled the strings inconspicuously even as Virat Kohli donned the captaincy garb. Anyone who succeeded Dhoni would be measured, unfairly, against the great man. Wriddhiman Saha perhaps felt the pinch in the five-day game, but it's to Pant's credit that he has more than held his own, setting himself up as the X-factor in Test matches while, steadily, threatening to translate his immense white-ball potential into decisive performances.

Incredible knocks

Already in his six-year Test career - he hasn't played a five-day game since December 2022, one must not forget - Pant has uncorked some of the most incredible knocks on foreign patch. He has more masterpieces in 33 Tests than most have in a lifetime of First Class cricket, a tribute to his immense skills but also his enormous self-belief and confidence. Stunning centuries in Australia, England and South Africa, a jaw-dropping 97 in Sydney in 2021 that nearly facilitated a successful assault on a fourth-innings target of 407, and an exceptional unbeaten 89 in the next outing in Brisbane to turbocharge India's historic three-wicket win, the first time in more than three decades that Australia had been tamed at the Gabbatoir.

In patches, Pant's fledgling career seemed to mirror his Delhi mate Virender

Pant has more masterpieces in 33 Tests than most have in a lifetime of First Class cricket, a tribute to his immense skills but also his enormous self-belief and confidence

Sehwag's, though. Credited rightly with redefining the approach to opening the batting in Tests, Sehwag didn't exactly court the kind of limited-overs success his aggressive batsmanship commanded. True, he did become the second batter after Sachin Tendulkar to make a 50-over double hundred in internationals, but Sehwag's was a white-ball career unfulfilled, by and large. For all the strokes at his command, and the consistency and strike-rate in Tests, he didn't quite stride the white-ball firmament like a colossus. Pant seemed headed the same way for a while, though he now appears to have picked up the pieces and is well on his way to establishing himself as a cross-format behemoth.

And to think that, some 20 months back nearly to the day, he was waging a serious battle merely to stay alive. A horrific single-car road accident threatened to derail life as he knew it - not just cricketing, but life as a whole. Pant lay in hospital, physically battered, needing a series of surgeries to keep his crumbling body in shape. At the time, a comeback to international cricket was the last thing on anyone's mind. Except Pant's, that is.

It takes a special individual to possess the equanimity and sense of humour to make light of one of the most traumatic experiences. Firmly on the road to recovery as he put himself through an arduous rehabilitation process, Pant recalled that dark December 30 night of 2022 through the simplistic lens through which he has chosen to view life. "I had taken an SUV, but what I was seeing was a sedan," he said of his immediate thoughts in the aftermath of the accident. He could afford to laugh at himself, more than 14 months later, but can one even begin to imagine what it must have been like for a professional sportsperson, for just anyone, to be confronted with the prospect of losing one's right leg?

Where Pant is today is a tribute to his resolve. To his resilience and to the realisation that, having been given a second chance in the real sense of the term, he must make the most of it. Pant isn't given to hyperbole; he isn't as visibly expressive as some of his other colleagues. But inside that once-stocky frame that now appears lighter than it ever has resides a strong mind and a big heart.

Keith Miller, the great Australian all-rounder who fought in World War II, was once asked by Michael Parkinson about pressure in cricket. "Pressure is a Messerschmitt (German fighter aircraft) up your arse, playing cricket is not," he retorted. Pant might hold a similar view though he might not articulate it as colourfully as the Aussie. He has come face to face with the worst of the worst and come out unscathed (as far as we can tell). What's a 150-kmph thunderbolt?

Since his return to competitive cricket in March during the IPL, Pant has played 20-over cricket exclusively - for his franchise Delhi Capitals, and for India at the T20 World Cup and now here in Sri Lanka. Next week in Colombo could be the first time in 21 months, since Christchurch in November 2022, that he will be playing a 50-over game. It's no one's guess how he will stand up to the rigours of an extended limited-overs encounter, or indeed to those of Test cricket - India will begin a packed season on September 19 with the first of two Tests against Bangladesh in Chennai - for Pant's fitness is no longer in question. He is well and truly back, the accident a distant but constant reminder of how things can turn in the bat of an eyelid, perhaps truer than imaginable in this instance.

Found his calling

Pant seems to have found his calling as a top-four batter in T20s. It's a role he can reprise in the other two formats too simply because of the immense potential for damage coiled within his frame. In November, he will return to Australia, where he is something of a cult hero not just for his brazen knocks in 2018-19 and 2020-21, but also for his banter with then skipper Tim Paine on his first tour Down Under, six years back. Australia loves nothing more than a scrapper, someone capable of giving back as good as he gets. Pant is a handful with the bat and behind the stumps, but he is more than capable of holding his own in the battle of the lip with his quixotic humour delivered deadpan.

For all his gravitas, Pant is still the cuddly boy next door. The grim experiences of 20 months back haven't dampened his spirit; the little kid in him surfaces more than occasionally, especially when he hauls himself off the turf without using his hands through the strength of his legs and his upper body, thanks to his grounding in gymnastics. But there is no doubting his maturity, his cricketing acumen, his out-of-the-box thinking. Rishabh Pant is the real deal, never mind his occasional dalliance with ordinariness.

THE GIST

- It's to Pant's credit that he has more than held his own in the face of comparisons to his role model Dhoni, setting himself up as the X-factor in Test matches while, steadily, threatening to translate his immense white-ball potential into decisive performances
- He seems to have found his calling as a top-four batter in T20s. It's a role he can reprise in the other two formats too simply because of the immense potential for damage coiled within his frame
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- Pant is a handful with the bat and behind the stumps, but he is more than capable of holding his own in the battle of the lip with his quixotic humour delivered deadpan

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, JUL. 29
RISE 06:05 SET 18:47
RISE 00:20 SET 13:26

TUESDAY, JUL. 30
RISE 06:05 SET 18:47
RISE 01:09 SET 14:25

WEDNESDAY, JUL. 31
RISE 06:05 SET 18:47
RISE 02:01 SET 15:26

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	32	26
Mysuru	29	22
Bengaluru	26	21

Bengaluru Today
29°C The weather will be slight warm with cloudy sky. Night will be pleasant. Chaces of light rain and thundershower at few places.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
28°C Day will be comfortable with cloudy sky. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower is a chance.

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THE HINDU
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BBMP likely to go in for twin-tube tunnel roads

Although single tube costs less than twin tubes, the latter is more feasible in terms of safety and easy movement of traffic, according to an official

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) finds construction of twin-tube tunnel roads more feasible than single-tube tunnels along north-south and east-west high dentistry corridors in the city, according to the feasibility study report.

The study was conducted by New Delhi-based M/s Althinok Consulting Engineering Inc. at a cost of ₹5.54 crore. After the State Budget, the BBMP set aside ₹200 crore under "Brand Bengaluru: Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru" for the preparation of the preliminary project report.

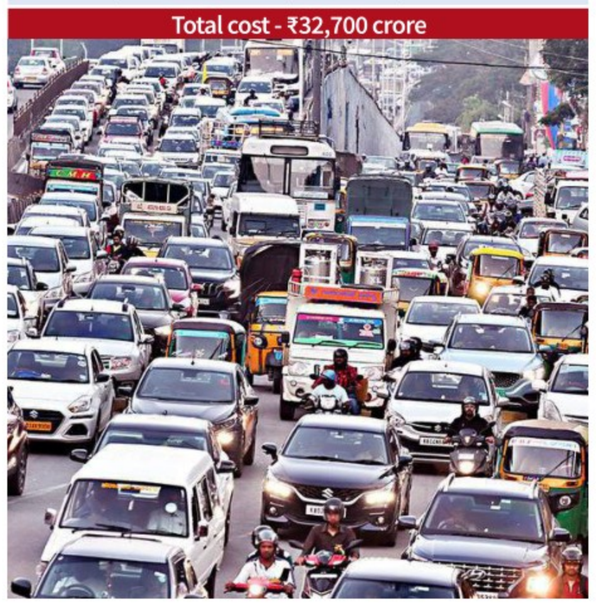
According to the report accessed by *The Hindu*, twin-tube tunnels with three lanes each along the north-south corridor (Hebbal junction to Silk Board) will cost ₹12,690 crore. For the single tube, the estimated cost is ₹11,065 crore. While the cost is estimated for a distance of 18.5 km, the total length of the tunnel will be 24.5 km. The cost per km for twin tubes is estimated at ₹600 crore.

The BBMP will commence work along this route soon after issuing a tender. For the east-west (K.R. Puram to Mysuru Road) high-density corridor of 30 km, the estimated cost of a twin-tube tunnel is ₹18,000 crores. The cost of both corridors, totalling 54.5 km, is estimated at ₹32,700 crore.

Twin-tube tunnels

- North-south corridor: Esteem Mall - Mehkri Circle - Chalukya Circle - Lal Bagh - Silk Board junction
  - Length: 24.5 km
  - Cost: ₹14,700 crore
- East-west corridor: K.R. Puram - Old Madras Road - Ulsoor - Richmond Circle - Hudson Circle – Mysuru Road
  - Length: 30 km
  - Cost: 18,000 crore

Total cost - ₹32,700 crore



A senior BBMP official said although the single tube costs less than the twin tubes, the latter is more feasible in terms of safety and easy movement of traffic. "A single tube tunnel has been constructed in Turkey, but the length is a mere 600 meters. The length of the north-south corridor in the city is 18.5 km and for this length, a single tube is not feasible. For single tube, more ramps/intersections are required," the official explained.

"The design for the north-south corridor shows that tube 1 will have an entry ramp towards Silk Board and tube 2 will have an exit ramp from Silk Board. Along the same corridor, tube 1 will have an entry ramp from Chalukya Circle and K.R. Circle. The second entry ramp cuts across tube 1 to reach tube 2. Tube 2 will have an exit ramp from Silk Board and an exit ramp from Hebbal. Another exit ramp to connect tube 1 will be a ramp from Hebbal towards Dairy Circle," the official added..

Now, theft of material prolongs completion of Ejipura flyover

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

The long-pending Ejipura flyover project in Koramangala might remain incomplete for sometime to come. The latest hindrance to its completion being materials worth crores being stolen, forcing the new company that has bagged the tender to procure them afresh. This means commuters have to continue to endure an arduous journey on this stretch.

The stretch, which has about seven signals, chokes at points from Kendriya Sadan Junction to Ejipura Junction. Commuters rue that during the peak hours, the travel of about 2.5 km takes 30 to 40 minutes. Riddled with potholes as well, the stretch is an impossible commute particularly for bike riders during rains.

An additional ₹200 crore is required to complete the Ejipura flyover. With this, the total cost of the project will be ₹275 crore. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Ejipura flyover project

- Project commenced in 2017
- Deadline for completion missed in 2019, 2021 and 2022
- Second tender floated in August 2022; later withdrawn
- Third tender floated in July 2023
- Work resumed in July 2024
- Initial project cost: ₹144 crore
- Money spent so far: ₹75 crore
- Estimated total cost now: ₹275 crore

How it all began

The work to build the 2.5-km-long flyover – from the junction of Ejipura Main Road-Inner Ring Road to Kendriya Sadan Junction – that commenced in 2017, was stopped multiple times due to tussle between contractors and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). The cost of the project has been a bone of contention.

According to a senior BBMP official, so far, ₹75 crore has been spent and nearly 50% of the work has been completed. Now, an additional ₹200 crore is required to complete the project. With this, the total cost of the project will be ₹275 crore.

The BBMP floated the tender for the third time for the project in July 2023, after previous tenders issued in August 2022, did not see bidders. The first tender had ended prematurely. The first company that bagged the contract in 2017 was Simplex Infrastructure Limited, which missed deadlines in 2019, 2021 and 2022 before the termination of the contract by the BBMP.

Work resumes

About 11 months after the fresh tender was issued, the work started in July 2024. The BBMP has set a deadline of 18 months to complete the pending works.

A senior worker who is in charge of the project at the site, speaking to *The Hindu*, claimed that a major impediment to expedite the work is that the new company has to purchase materials which were stolen. These materials are used to install launch graders, he said. The present company that bagged contract is Hyderabad-based BSCPL Infrastructure Limited, which has given subcontract to BMR Constructions which has again given contract to Kerala-based SELMEC Engineering Construction. SELMEC is executing the work on the ground.

The worker said that procuring new materials will take at least three to four months as there is a standard procedure for the same. Although the deadline is 18 months, it may take at least two years to complete the project, he claimed.

A senior BBMP official confirmed that the material had been stolen and said that at the current rate, the completion of project may go beyond three years. The BBMP is also pushing the company to meet the deadline, he added.

Eight-year problem

Lingaraju M., an auto driver, said that in the past eight years, after construction began, traffic snarls had increased. The travel time on this stretch had also increased. The apathy of the BBMP was the root cause of the problem. He pointed out that many auto drivers refused to ply on this stretch due to the prevailing problem.

Ramashish, who has a paan shop near Ejipura signal, said, "We are fed up of watching this never-ending project. This has also impacted the business in the area. Due to congested roads, people do not wish to stop in the area."

(This is the first in a series on long-pending infrastructure projects in Bengaluru)

Man held for harassment

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bagalagunte police arrested a 27-year-old private firm employee for allegedly harassing a woman captain of a bike taxi during a ride from Jalahalli on Saturday night.

The victim picked up the accused Mahesh, a native of Jaipur and working at a private firm, from HMT circle in Jalahalli to Dasarahalli.

The accused on the way allegedly passed comments. The victim alerted the control room and shared her location, following which the Hoysala patrolling vehicle reached the spot and detained Mahesh and brought him to the station.

From Page One

'Congress govt. scaring away investors'

She said: "Open market borrowings have increased and it has touched over ₹1 lakh crore. Borrowing after borrowing to fulfil the promise (of five guarantees) is happening."

Ms. Sitharaman said, "Karnataka – which was healthy, had revenue surplus, invested on CAPEX, and drew investment – is today frightening investments out of the State because of the steps that they (government) are taking one after the other. I am not sure if they are consulting industry or other stakeholders."

Police open fire at rowdy sheeters involved in chopping off Dalit man's hand

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Ramanagara district police on Sunday opened fire at the prime accused allegedly involved in the attack and chopping off the left hand of a Dalit man in Kanakupura town on July 21, when they allegedly attacked the police officials in a bid to escape.

The accused, identified as Harsha and his associate Karunesh, had been on the run since the incident and were tracked down at an isolated place in Kaggalipura where they had taken shelter. According to the police, a team of police surrounded the area and warned the duo to surrender. They, however, in a bid to escape, attacked policemen Rajashekhar and Shivakumar. The police warned them to surrender by firing in the air and later shot at their legs to stop them from fleeing.

The injured have been shifted to the hospital where they are recovering.

Investigations into the incident revealed that the accused, who are rowdy sheeters having multiple cases pending against them, belonged to the upper caste and wanted to dominate over others in the area. The accused, armed with lethal weapons, confronted the victim, Anish Kumar, who was sitting outside the house, and heckled him. When Anish objected, they allegedly abused him and his family members using casteist slurs and later chopped his hand. While Anish is undergoing treatment at St. John's Hospital, his family members and relatives are being treated at a local hospital.

The Kanakapura police have registered an FIR against seven persons in connection with the incident, and the others are absconding.

Following back-to-back incidents in the area of Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's constituency, Dalit organisations staged a protest demanding strict action.

INBRIEF

New leadership team

Rotary Club of Bangalore East installed its leadership team for 2024-25 on Saturday. At a function organised at the Indiranagar Club, Rotary District Governor Sathish Madhavan installed president Ashok K.C. and his team, according to a press release.

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the July 29 issue, we have a story on what stakeholders think of Karnataka's proposal to levy a cess on movie tickets, OTT subscriptions, and theatrical performances to aid artistes in distress. The Karnataka Cine and Cultural Activists (Welfare) Bill, 2024, passed by the Legislature on June 26, envisages constituting a welfare board and establishing a fund to provide social security to film and theatre workers and artistes.

Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (July 29, Monday), the following explainers are available:

On reservations and the OBC creamy layer
bit.ly/obcreamylayerexp

'Dark oxygen' discovery could ensnarl deep-sea mining
bit.ly/darkoxygen

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHAM Sunder, S/O: Gurachar Domunji, R/O: C104, Ground Flr,C Blk, Ittina Abby Aprt, Nr Ram Mandir, L B Shastri Ngr, Blr – 17, have changed my name as Sham Sunder Domunji vide afdvt dtd 24/07/24.

REAL ESTATE

WANTED LAND: In and around Nandi Hills - Chikaballpura, Devanahalli we are looking for 2 to 15 acres of top-notch property for a school with at least a 40-foot-wide, attractive access road and a frontage of at least 400 feet. Clear Titles & Real Owners. Contact Sumanth Narayan. Email: info@eduweft.com or +91 96063 53036

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
"The All-India Electricity Sports Control Board is an organization functioning with the avowed objective of promoting and nurturing sporting talents in Electricity Industries in India. The said Board is registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Act, 1975 vide Certificate bearing No. SRG/ Chennai Central/221/2023 dated 13.09.2023. There exists no other organization, whatsoever with the given name, and only the above-said organization is authorized to conduct sporting events all over the country on behalf of all the State Electricity Boards. If any other organization is conducting events in the said name, it will be considered as an unauthorized event and the organizers will be liable to face the legal consequences accordingly."
GENERAL SECRETARY
ALL INDIA ELECTRICITY
SPORTS CONTROL BOARD

MAHARASHTRA RURAL ROAD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION,
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA, SATARA

PUBLIC SHORT TENDER NOTICE NO.15/2024-25

Under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Part-2, in Satara District Talukas- Phaltan, Patan, Khatav, Man, Mahabaleshwar, Wai, Khandala, Karad, Koregaon, Satara and Jaoli Estimated cost of Rs. 27840.70 Lakhs for Total 6 Packages, 66 Works E-Tender Notice No. 15/2024-25 is Published on the website https://mahatenders.gov.in dated 29/07/2024 from 11.00 am.

Sd/-
(Y.A.Desai)
Executive Engineer,
PMGSY, MRRDA, Satara

DGIPR/2024/2025/1263
AVOID SELF MEDICATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

This notice is issued on behalf of my client **Sri. G.Settu** to bring to the notice of the general public that the Original JDA dt.13.10.2006, Doc No.18490/2006-07 of Book I, CD No.BASD279, in the office of the Sub-Registrar Bangalore South, Bangalore, GPA dt.13.10.2006 Doc No.716/2006-07 of Book IV, CD No.BASD279, in the office of the Sub-Registrar Bangalore South, Bangalore and Supplementary Agreement dated 21.03.2010 in respect of Site No.33, measuring East to West 60 feet and North to South 55+50/2 feet, total measuring **3150 Sq.ft.,** Situated at **Kodichikkanahalli Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore,** having Bommanahalli CMC Khatha No.42/33 has been lost at the time of travelling.
All the persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said JDA, GPA and Supplementary Agreement. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within **7 days** from this present along with that Police Complaint is also given vide **Lost Report No.1165596/2024, dated 27.07.2024.**
Y. Sowmya Yadav, Advocate
Samvruddhi Legal, # 83, Ground Floor, 5th 'A' Cross, 21st Main, J.P. Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78. **M : 9916343921**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client proposes to purchase the property described in the schedule hereunder from its owners; (1) Smt. Pushpa Jagadish Hinduja, W/o. Late Jagadish Naraindas Hinduja, aged about 78 years, (2) Sri. Sumeer Jagadish Hinduja, S/o. Late Jagadish Naraindas Hinduja, aged about 55 years, (3) Sri. Munish Jagadish Hinduja, S/o. Late Jagadish Naraindas Hinduja, aged about 51 years, all presently residing at No.42 (Old Site No.203), 2nd Main, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru - 560 080. The Owners represent that, Late Jagadish Naraindas Hinduja died on 12-08-2022 leaving behind a will dated 07-05-2018 wherein, the Schedule Property is bequeathed to the aforementioned three persons who are his only legal heirs. They further represent that, they are the absolute owners of the Schedule Property and that no other person/s has any right, title, interest or claim over the schedule property and the Owners further represent that, they have offered the Schedule Property as security to the financial assistance availed from IndusInd Bank and except the said charge, they have not mortgaged, charged, sold, transferred, created any lien or encumbered the Schedule Property or any part thereof in any manner whatsoever. It is further represented that the owners have not entered into any Agreement of Sale / Development Agreement / Memorandum of Understanding / Arrangement etc., and / or have executed any power of attorney and / or any such arrangement with any person/s with regard to the Schedule Property or any part thereof whereby the owners are restrained from entering into any Agreements of Sale and / or conveyance in favour of our client. Person/s having claims or objections if any, are hereby called upon to lodge the same in writing along with supporting documents with the undersigned **within 15 days** from the date of this notice failing which, such claims or objections if any, shall be considered to have been waived and/or given up and our client shall proceed with the above mentioned transaction.
SCHEDULE
All that piece and parcel of residential property bearing Municipal No.42 (Old Site No.203), PID No. 99-1-42, in Palace Upper Orchards Layout formed by the then City Improvement Trust Board, Bangalore, together with residential building comprising ground and first floors, having a super built-up area of 4657 square feet, situated at Aramane Nagara Ward No.35, 2nd Main Road, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru-560080 and is bounded on the:
East by : Site No.204, West by : Site No.202, North by : Site No.341 & South by : Road.
Site ad-measuring East - West : 80 Feet, North - South : 123 Feet, and totally measuring about 9840 square feet.
Gururaj & Associates, Advocates
Apartment No. 16, 3rd Floor, "Royal Park", No. 34, Park Road, Bangalore - 560 051.
Bangalore, Date: 28.07.2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is informed that My clients **Shamanth G s/o P Gurappa & Smt Ramya S w/o Shamanth G** intends to purchase the property described in the schedule herein from **M/s SREE KRISHNA CONSTRUCTIONS** (hereinafter builder/seller) The builder/seller represents and warrant that it is the absolute owner of the schedule property and it has not conveyed or entered into any Agreement to Sell/MOU or any sort of agreement with any other person/s, for sale/transfer of the schedule property and that the builder/seller further represents and warrants that it has not encumbered, mortgaged or created any lien on the schedule property in any manner and apart from it no other person/s, includes legal heirs, Firm or Company having any sort of right, title or claim over the schedule property. Any person/s having any objection/s or claim/s shall with documentary evidence lodge their objection/s, claim/s, within **Seven(07) days** from the date of this notice with the undersigned, failing which my clients shall proceed with the above mentioned transaction.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the Residential **2 BHK Flat No: 408, 3th Floor,** in **KRISHNA LAKEFRONT,** measuring SBA of 1183 sqft with Balcony with **824 sqft** carpet area, constructed on Sy.No.49/2 measuring 33 guntas, Khata no.174/49/2/126/126 Land conversion order no. ALN.(E)SR(KH)39/2012-13 with 1 **covered Car Parking space,** Situated at **Seegehalli Village, KR Pura Hobli, Bangalore East Tq,** under BBMP limits, Bengaluru.
Prashanth B.K, Advocate,
No.17, Sir M V 2nd Cross, Kalkere Main Road, Ramamurthynagar
Bengaluru-560016 M : 09900056401
Bengaluru Date : 29-07-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public are hereby informed that my client intend to buy the below mentioned Schedule property from **1.Smt.GOWRAMMA N, 2.Smt.BHAGYAMMA @ BAGYA V N,** and **3. MANGALAMMA @ MANGALA M,** all are daughters of **Sri.Narayanappa**. If any person/s or Institution, Authority etc., have got any objections or claiming any right, title and interest of what so ever nature on the Schedule Property, are hereby required to communicate the same along with supporting documents to me at my Office **within (10) TEN days** from this day. Otherwise, the Sale transaction will be completed without any reference or regard to any such purported claim or interest, which shall be deemed to have been waived to all intents and purposes.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the **Agricultural Land bearing Survey No.30/10, earlier Sy No.30/4, Old Sy No.30, Measuring 1-00 Acre (out of land measuring 01-11 Guntas), Situated at VADERAHALLI Village, Dasanapura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District,** and bounded on:
East by : Property belongings to Sri.Muniyamma
West by : Property belongings to Sri.Muniyappa
North by : Remaining portion of land allotted Sri.Narayanapp & Others
South by : Property belongings to Sri.Munihanumaiah
Address for Service:
BUILD LEGAL
Mr. B.T.PRASANNA KUMAR, B.Sc. L.L.B.,
LOKESH V NAYAKA
Smt. ASHA SM,
ADVOCATES,
No.25, First Floor, Public Utility Building, M.G.Road,
Bengaluru- 560001. Mob.9243118157

Surprising 'dark oxygen' discovery could ensnarl deep-sea mining

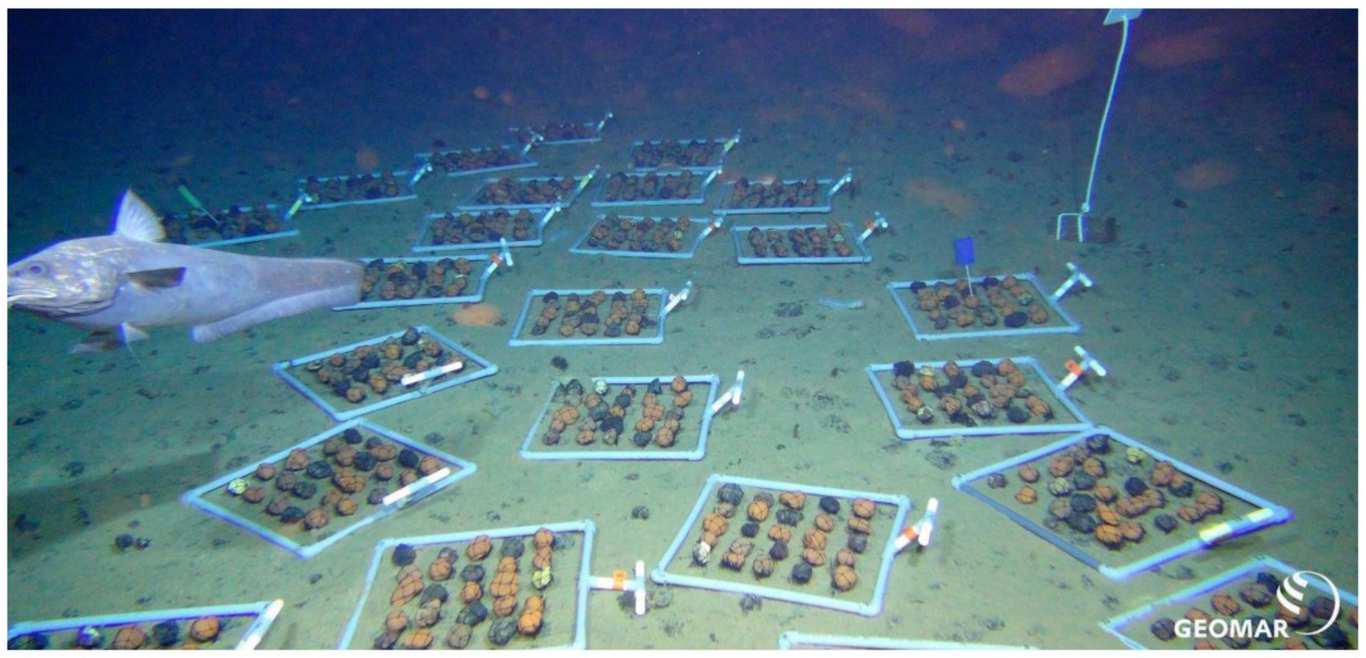
Deep-sea mining is expected to be a major marine resource extraction activity in the coming decades. The International Seabed Authority has established at least two 15-year contracts with the Government of India to look for polymetallic nodules and polymetallic sulphides in the deep seabed

The Hindu Bureau

An unknown process is producing oxygen deep in the world's oceans, where it is too dark for photosynthesis, scientists reported on July 22 in the journal *Nature Geoscience*. The finding has important implications because oxygen helps support life and the discovery implies the existence of previously unknown ecosystems.

Many governments are also bound to take notice since one explanation for the oxygen is that polymetallic nodules are transporting electric charges that split water molecules around them, releasing oxygen. Polymetallic nodules are lumps of iron, manganese hydroxides, and rock partially submerged in many parts of the ocean floor. If their concentration exceeds 10 kg per square metre, mining them is considered to be economically feasible – and many countries are planning to do so as a new resource.

On July 22, *Reuters* reported an unnamed "top government scientist" saying India is planning to "apply for licences to explore for deep-sea minerals in the Pacific Ocean". India's Ministry of Earth Sciences is also currently building a submersible vehicle that will look for and mine similar resources in the Indian Ocean as part of its 'Deep Ocean Mission'.



A studyunder way on the seafloor of the Clarion-Clipperton Zone to investigate the impact that potential manganese nodule mining in the deep sea would have on ecosystems there. ROV-TEAM/GEOMAR

Where was the study conducted?

The oxygen discovery raises questions about how deep-sea mining to extract polymetallic nodules will affect marine ecosystems.

The scientists behind the study, from Germany, the U.K., and the U.S., were studying the Clarion-Clipperton Zone, a part of the ocean floor off Mexico's west coast. Covering an area larger than India, the Zone is considered to have the world's highest concentration of polymetallic nodules, including 6 billion tonnes of manganese and more than 200 million tonnes each of copper and nickel.

When the scientists were conducting experiments at a depth of 4 km, they noticed the oxygen concentration in some places rapidly increased instead of decreasing. They conducted follow-up studies in 2020 and 2021. In each case, they released a device from the surface that would land on the ocean floor, where it would isolate a small volume of the floor along with some sea water and measure the oxygen levels.

This underwater region is called the abyssal zone. It receives too little sunlight for photosynthesis to be feasible. Instead, life-forms here get oxygen from water carried in by a global circulation called the 'Great Conveyor Belt'. Still, the amount of oxygen is low and without any local production, the device should have measured the oxygen levels dropping as small animals consumed it. But the scientists found the opposite: it increased, sometimes tripling in just two days.

They double-checked the finding by recreating the conditions on the ocean floor in their lab, and found the oxygen levels to increase up to a point before dropping.

What is the source?

When they measured the physical characteristics of the nodules, they found their surfaces to have a voltage of up to 0.95 V. Splitting one water molecule requires 1.5 V, but the researchers have suspected the voltage could build up if many nodules are close together, like the cells of a battery.

Andrew Sweetman, an ecologist with the Scottish Association for Marine Science in the U.K. and a coauthor of the study, told *Nature*, "We have another source of oxygen on the planet, other than photosynthesis." His team is calling it 'dark oxygen'.

Oxygen sources are valuable because they allow life to survive. But as the lab experiment indicated, the nodules could only produce oxygen as long as they could muster a sufficient voltage. The nodules' own energy source is also not clear.

What is deep-sea mining?

Given the quantity of polymetallic nodules on the ocean floor, deep-sea mining is expected to be a major marine resource extraction activity in the coming decades. The International Seabed Authority has established 15-year contracts with at least 22 contractors – including the Government of India – to look for polymetallic nodules, polymetallic sulphides, and cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts in the deep seabed. China alone is expected to mine 17% of the Clarion-Clipperton Zone.

> The finding has important implications because oxygen helps support life and the discovery implies the existence of previously unknown ecosystems

The new finding raises the possibility of such mining damaging ecosystems that require 'dark oxygen' to survive. Experts have found deep-sea mining itself could be harmful to the marine environment, 'dark oxygen' or not.

In 1989-1996, scientists from Germany conducted the Disturbance and Recolonisation (DISCOL) Experiment in the Peru Basin as the world's "first large-scale impact assessment" to assess the "environmental impacts originating from the mining of polymetallic nodules". They built a device that disturbed the sea floor like a deep-sea mining exercise might have and collected data about how the disturbances changed local oceanographic and sedimentological profiles, among other things.

A 2019 study in the journal *Scientific Reports* reported that "the effects of simulated mining impacts induced during the DISCOL [Experiment] were still evident in the megabenthos of the Peru Basin after 26 years."

The affect on deep-sea mining

The same study also reported "significantly lower heterogeneity diversity in disturbed areas" and added that "if the results of this experiment ... can be extrapolated to the Clarion-Clipperton Zone, the impacts of polymetallic nodule mining there may be greater than expected, and could potentially lead to an irreversible loss of some ecosystem functions".

In November 2023, *Nature* reported based on a paper published then that deep-sea mining "for minerals could harm deep-sea jellyfish, according to the first study of mining impacts on animals living in the water column."

Scientists also know less about ecosystems in the abyssal zone than they do about many of those aboveground, which means the models scientists use to predict their fate and their role in global climate processes could be unreliable. With these and other issues in mind, on July 20, three major European insurance companies said they would exclude deep-sea mining from their underwriting portfolios.

'Dark oxygen' adds to these challenges. If deep-sea mining doesn't find sustainable ways to respond to them, it may be rendered altogether infeasible.

THE GIST

Polymetallic nodules are lumps of iron, manganese hydroxides, and rock partially submerged in many parts of the ocean floor. If their concentration exceeds 10 kg per sq.m, mining them is considered feasible. Many countries plan to do so

When many nodules are close together they could generate enough voltage to split one water molecule. According to one researcher, 'We have another source of oxygen on the planet.' His team is calling it 'dark oxygen.'

The finding raises the possibility of mining damaging ecosystems that require 'dark oxygen' to survive. Experts have found deep-sea mining itself could be harmful to the ocean, 'dark oxygen' or not

BIG SHOT

Embers blowing away from a burning tree near Payne Creek, California, as the Park Fire, which has grown to 1.4 lakh ha, continued to spread on Saturday. Strong winds and dried vegetation fueled the fire that destroyed 28,000 ha in the first 24 hours after a man allegedly pushed a burning car into a ravine. In 2018, more than 18,000 structures were destroyed and 85 people were killed in nearby Paradise when a camp fire entrapped thousands of people and became the most destructive in California history. AFP

WHAT IS IT?

Ariel: another watery moon?

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Solar System has many mysteries. We don't know why the Sun's corona is so hot. We don't know why Saturn's moon, Titan, has such a significant atmosphere. We don't know why Triton rotates in the direction opposite to its host planet, Neptune, although a recent study found an answer: Triton and Pluto had a common origin before Neptune pulled Triton to itself.

Another mystery in the Solar System may be coming to a similar close. Astronomers have been curious why the surface of Uranus's moon Ariel has frozen carbon dioxide (CO_2). At that distance from the Sun, the CO_2 should have already vaporised into space — yet the ice covers the moon's surface. On July 24, NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) reported evidence of a liquid ocean buried under Ariel's surface, supplying CO_2 to the world above.

The people behind the finding came to this conclusion when they found carbon monoxide. If Ariel has to have this compound, it has to have a surface temperature around 18 degrees C less than what it is, or it could have a subsurface ocean producing carbon oxides. One side of Ariel has cracks and grooves through which icy slop and these compounds could be gushing out to the surface. JWST also found signs of carbonite minerals, which could be formed when water interacts with rocks.

This image of the complex terrain of Ariel was taken by Voyager 2 in 1986. NASA

More studies and space missions will be needed to confirm these details. If there are, we'll have yet another water-bearing moon out there.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

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A BG-BGE

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of Indian sportswomen who won Olympic medals

8 Manu Bhaker becomes the first Indian markswoman to secure an Olympic medal, ending a 12-year drought in medals for shooting, with the most recent win being from shooter Vijay Kumar in the 2012 London Olympics. PTI

Funds raised by the Harris campaign for the U.S. electoral race

200 in $ million. This amount was raised in less than a week. Vice President Kamala Harris' candidacy earned enough delegates to become the presumptive nominee. PTI

The points deducted from Canada women's soccer team

6 FIFA dished out several punishments to the Canadian womens' soccer team. Two assistant coaches were caught using drones to spy on opponent New Zealand's practices before their opening game. PTI

The projects advanced by Coal India Ltd to boost output

119 Coal India Ltd is advancing projects with a capacity of 896 million tonne per year and a sanctioned capital of ₹1,33,576 crore. The company has set a target of 1 billion tonne of production by 2025-26. PTI

The smuggled foreign cigarettes seized in Mumbai

63 in lakh. The Special Intelligence and Investigation Branch seized the cigarettes with an estimated value of ₹6.5 crore from Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On reservations and the OBC creamy layer

What were the recommendations of the Mandal Commission? What is the criteria for exclusion of the 'creamy layer' of the Other Backward Class? Is the concentration of reservation benefits a concern? What can done for a more equitable distribution?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan. R

The story so far:
The allotment of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) to Puja Khedkar as an Other Backward Class (OBC) Non-Creamy Layer (NCL) candidate coupled with multiple disabilities has raised issues surrounding the creamy layer in OBC reservation.

What is the history of reservation?
Articles 15 and 16 guarantee equality to all citizens in any policy of the government and public employment respectively. In order to achieve social justice, they also enable special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes or OBC, Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). Reservations for SC and ST are fixed at 15% and 7.5% respectively, in jobs, educational institutions and public sector undertakings (PSU) at the central level. It was in 1990, when V. P. Singh was Prime Minister, that 27% reservation for OBC was implemented in central government employment based on Mandal Commission (1980) recommendations. Subsequently in 2005, reservation was enabled for OBC, SC and ST in educational institutions including private institutions. In 2019, 10% reservation was enabled for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the unreserved category.

What is the creamy layer?
The 27% reservation for OBC was upheld by the Supreme Court in the *Indra Sawhney* case (1992). It opined that caste is a determinant of class in the Indian context. However, in order to uphold the basic structure of equality, it fixed a cap of 50% for reservation unless there are exceptional circumstances. The court also provided for exclusion of creamy layer from OBC.

High stakes: Aspirants look for their roll numbers before the UPSC civil services exam, on June 16. PTI

The criteria for identifying a person as part of the creamy layer is based on the recommendations of the Justice Ram Nandan Prasad Committee (1993). It is determined by the position/income of an applicant's parents alone. The criteria for belonging to creamy layer is parental income, excluding income from salary and agricultural income, being more than ₹8 lakh in each year in the last three consecutive financial years. Further, the following categories of applicants are also considered as belonging to creamy layer : (a) parents, either of whom entered government service (centre or State) as Group A/Class I officer or parents, both of whom entered as Group B/Class II officers or father, who was recruited in Group B/Class II post and promoted to Group A/Class I before 40 years of age; (b) either of the parents employed in a managerial position in PSUs; (c) either of the parents holding constitutional posts.

What are the issues?
The recent controversy has raised issues surrounding the inadequacies in the process. There are allegations that some applicants manage to obtain NCL or EWS certificate through dubious means. The same may also be true with respect to disability certificates in order to take benefit of the 4% of seats reserved for persons with disabilities in central government jobs. There are also allegations of applicants and their parents adopting strategies to get around the creamy layer exclusion like gifting of assets, taking premature retirement etc., since the applicant's or his/her spouse's income is not considered for such exclusion. Another contentious issue relates to concentration of reservation benefits. The Rohini Commission, that was set up for providing recommendation on sub-categorisation among OBC castes, has estimated that 97% of reserved jobs and seats in educational institutions have been garnered by just around 25% of the OBC castes/sub-castes at the central level. Close to 1,000 of around 2,600 communities under the OBC category had zero representation in jobs and educational institutes. Similar issue of concentration of reservation benefits persists in the SC and ST category as well. There is neither any exclusion based on 'creamy layer' for these communities.

The reservation at present stands at 60%, including the reservation for EWS. Considering societal realities, this higher percentage of reservation is required. It is pertinent to note that as per government replies in Parliament, 40-50% of seats reserved for OBC, SC and ST in the central government remain unfilled.

What can be the way forward?
The foremost requirement is to plug the loopholes in the issue of NCL, EWS and disability certificates. There must be thorough scrutiny to ensure that only eligible applicants obtain these benefits.

The vacancies for reserved communities should be filled without backlogs. Sub-categorisation of reservation may be essential to address the under representation or non-representation of various communities. Similarly, creamy layer exclusion in SC and ST category, at least for children of Group I/Class A government officials may be considered. These are sensitive matters in which for every argument in favour of such a proposal, there are valid counter arguments that can be advanced. Nevertheless, a discussion should begin on these aspects with all stakeholders to implement them. This would ensure that benefits of reservation reach the more marginalised among underprivileged in successive generations.

Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

- Articles 15 and 16 guarantee equality to all citizens in any policy of the government and public employment respectively. In order to achieve social justice, they also enable special provisions for advancement of socially and educationally backward classes or OBC, Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST).
- The 27% reservation for OBC was upheld by the Supreme Court in the *Indra Sawhney* case (1992). It opined that caste is a determinant of class in the Indian context.
- Sub-categorisation of reservation may be essential to address the under representation or non-representation of various communities.

What is South Africa's new law on climate change?

What are the features of the law? Does India have an omnibus legislation on climate change?

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:
South Africa's President, Cyril Ramaphosa, signed into law a piece of legislation that will impose mandatory curbs on the emissions from large, fossil-fuel heavy industries and, require climate-adaptation plans from towns and villages. The President said this would enable South Africa to meet its emissions reduction commitments under the Paris agreement.

What is the significance of this law?
The Climate Change Bill was approved by South Africa's National Assembly last November. South Africa relies on coal as its primary fuel source for electricity generation and is one of the world's top 15 greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters. According to an official estimate, net emissions in 2017 were estimated at 512 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO2e), an increase of 14% from 2000. In 2022, this fell to 405 Mt CO2e, a 3% fall from 2021, according to Statista. It is unclear if these numbers are strictly comparable and if the fall was linked to the worldwide, temporary dip in emissions following COVID-19. The energy sector represents roughly 80% of gross emissions, with energy industries (~60%) and transport (~12%). Being an economy which is dependent on agriculture and tourism, South Africa has faced increasing Western pressure to accelerate its transition away from fossil fuel.

What steps has South Africa taken?
Every country submits Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), which are time-bound commitments to lower emissions. South Africa submitted its first NDC in 2016 and its updated NDC in 2021. The updated NDC commits to 31% reduction and a fixed target for GHG emissions levels of 398-510 MtCO2e by 2025, and 350-420 MtCO2e by 2030.

The NDC outlines an approach for a 'just transition,' – or the sustainable movement to jobs away from fossil-fuel dependent industries – to achieve targets, focusing on agriculture, forestry and other land use, energy, industrial processes and product use, and waste sectors. South Africa has estimated that it requires $8 billion per year by 2030. It has set an internal goal of reaching 'net zero emissions' by 2050 in its Low-Emission Development Strategy submitted in 2020. In addition, the Presidential Climate Commission released its Just Transition Framework in 2022, which aims to inform policy making at the nexus of climate and development to enable deep, just transformational shifts. These were the actions that preceded the signing of the Climate Change Bill.

What about India?
India does not have a comprehensive legislation on climate change. Priyanka Chaturvedi, the Rajya Sabha parliamentarian, had moved a Private Member's Bill, called the Council on Climate Change Bill, most recently in 2022. This proposed setting up a Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, for advising the Union government on all matters related to climate change but there has been no significant movement on this so far. However, climate change features in multiple Acts and subordinate legislation. These include the Environmental Protection Act, Forest Conservation Act, Energy Conservation Act, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act among others.

Are these enough?
In April this year, the Supreme Court ruled that citizens have a "right against the adverse effects of climate change," and referred to the fact that India did not have an omnibus legislation on climate change. "Despite Constitutional guarantees that give the citizens equality before the law and right to life and personal liberty, it was now necessary, in the Court's view, to explicitly link the impact of climate change as something which impedes these rights of liberty, life and equality." Prior to the UN Conference of Parties in Dubai last year, India communicated that the intensity of its energy emissions had reduced by 33% from 2005-2019, 11 years ahead of target. It also committed to revising its emissions intensity to 45% by 2030 in the updated set of NDC. Emission intensity refers to the total amount of GHG emitted for every unit increase of GDP. It is different from absolute emissions. India has also committed to source 50% of its electricity in 2030 from non-fossil fuel resources.

THE GIST

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- Climate change features in multiple Acts and subordinate legislation of India. These include the Environmental Protection Act, Forest Conservation Act, Energy Conservation Act, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act among others.

101 unauthorised schools across State regularised in the last year

Despite there being 172 unauthorised schools in Bengaluru South, 141 in Bengaluru North, and 29 in Bengaluru Rural, none of them were regularised. Officials said schools which had only committed minor violations were regularised

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

As many as 101 schools out of 993 recognised unauthorised schools were regularised by the Government across the State in 2023 - 24. None of the regularised schools were in Bengaluru.

The Department of School Education and Literacy had classified hundreds of schools as unauthorised institutions based on grounds like running without registration, teaching central syllabus while having permission only to teach State syllabus or having both State and central syllabus classes while having permission only to teach central syllabus, among other things.

The government had given time for the unauthorised schools with minor violations to get regularised. At this time, the highest number of schools (82) were regularised in Chitradurga followed by nine schools in Belagavi, four in Chikkaballapura two each in Chikkodi and Dharwad and one each in Bagalkot and Gadag, according to an answer given by Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa to a question raised in the Assembly.

The government had given time for the unauthorised schools with minor violations to get regularised. FILE PHOTO

Despite there being 172 unauthorised schools in Bengaluru South, 141 unauthorised schools in Bengaluru North and 29 unauthorised schools in Bengaluru Rural, none of them were regularised in the last year.

According to officials from the Department, schools which had committed only minor violations were regularised.

"The schools which had minor, easily rectifiable violations were given a chance to correct it and get regularised. This included things like getting permission for Kannada medium instruction and teaching in English, teaching central syllabus with State syllabus permission, upgradation etc. We are now focussing on more serious violations like the ones which are unregistered and will be cracking down on them," said B.B. Cauvery, Commissioner for Public Instruction.

No details

Many educationists in Bengaluru argued that while over a hundred schools have been regularised, the government never provides details about the basis on which these schools were regularised.

"If you take Bengaluru, the main problems are that of infrastructure including land conversion, fire safety and building plans. The next major problem is that of central syllabus being taught in State schools and taking permissions from multiple boards for a school which is run in the same building. How to find out how many regularised schools were classified as unauthorised under similar conditions?," asked D. Shashi Kumar, general secretary, Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools.

He added, "We have been asking time and again for them to tell us about how many schools have been declared unauthorised on the basis of each regulation. They do not say that and this small regularisation process is just an eyewash and a means for corruption. Moreover, the State should also look at writing to CBSE or ICSE about unauthorised schools to cancel their licences."

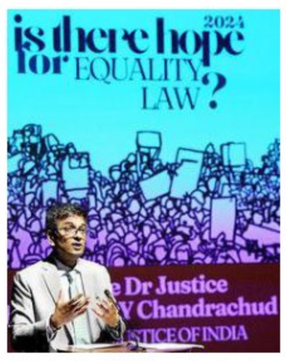
CJI: Conversations around anti-discrimination and equality are gaining currency

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Sunday said that today we stand in a world where conversations around anti-discrimination and equality are gaining currency.

Delivering the keynote address at the 11th Annual Conference of the Berkeley Center on Comparative Equality and Anti-Discrimination Law, Justice Chandrachud, people, especially the younger generation, are challenging our assumptions and daring us to imagine a more perfect world.

"The role of law is being reimagined - the historically wielded law which reifies and rigidifies social hierarchies are being replaced by laws to address discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Laws like the Criminal Tribes Act 1871 and Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code 1860 have given way to legislations like the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act



CJI Justice D.Y. Chandrachud at the NLSIU in Bengaluru.

2019," he said. Later replying to a query, he said that people who should be getting bail in the trial courts are not getting it there and as a result of this they come up before the higher courts.

'Playing it safe'

He said that trial judges are not granting bail on important issues of crime and that they are playing it safe.

"People who should be getting bail in the trial courts are not getting it there and they come to high courts. Those who should be getting bail in high courts are not getting bail and as a result people move it to the Supreme Court," he said.

He also said that trial courts need to be encouraged to be more receptive and accommodating to the concerns of the people who seek liberty. "The problem today is if we look at any grant of relief by the trial court with a degree of suspicion it means that the trial judges are increasingly playing safe and not granting bail on important issues," he said.

On artificial intelligence (AI) he said that though it has many beneficial uses, technology can also be misused. "AI has many beneficial uses, such as enhancing medical diagnostics. For instance, AI-powered diagnostic tools can analyse medical images with remarkable accuracy, assisting doctors in detecting diseases at earlier stages. However, technology can also be misused, providing novel and powerful tools for manipulative, exploitative, and social control practices," he said.

IIMB opens its gates to school students to empower them

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) threw its gates open to school students on Sunday for an event aimed at empowering the next generation of entrepreneurs.

"Youth Udyami," organised by the students of the Executive Post Graduate Programme (EPGP) and Post Graduate Programme for Enterprise Management (PGPEM), brought together aspiring young entrepreneurs. A release said the event received over 300 registrations, out of which 50 students from various schools across Bengaluru were shortlisted to present their ideas.

Amar Sapra, Chairperson of the EPGP, encouraged the students to become entrepreneurs and said, "To be successful in a new venture, entrepreneurs not only need a good business idea, but they also need plenty of luck. Some succeed in their first attempt, but many fail a few times before they succeed. This is why two qualities necessary to be a successful entrepreneur are persistence and resilience.

Mentorship was also provided by the IIMB students who helped prepare the pitch for pursuing their entrepreneurial ideas. Participants gave their presentation on identifying a problem, defining potential customers, developing a financial plan, planning for scaling, and creating a launch strategy. Abhinav, a participant, said, "Coming to IIMB for this programme has been an enriching experience. The mentorship and support helped us to refine our pitches and provided us with the direction to create a sustainable business model in the future."

The results will be announced in the first week of August. The grand finale will take place on "Prayaas Day," tentatively scheduled for February 2025. On this day, the final 10 applications will be judged by IIMB professors and industry leaders, who will evaluate the business models and provide feedback, the release added.

A case for regulating gig-based work

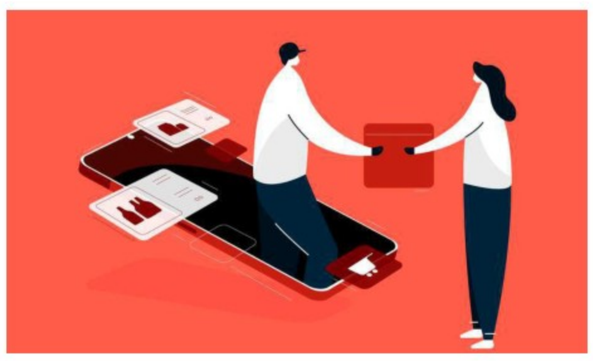
GUEST COLUMN

Rakshita Swamy
Biju Mathew

The Karnataka government's intent to introduce a legislation for the welfare of gig workers is a welcome and necessary step.

It squarely addresses the three big myths propagated by the gig and platform industry. The first myth that aggregators sell to promote platform work is that they would have "no boss" and would be "partners" and "captains" – anything but workers. This drew in many people, particularly the young, to join platform-based gigs. However, it soon became clear that this was not the case. There was a big boss – the algorithm and a network of team managers deployed at the local level to enforce the algorithm.

Algorithms dictate the number of hours the worker needs to put in on weekends, the orders to be delivered, cancellations and rating scores that ought to be maintained in order for tasks to be continually allocated to the worker, and finally when a worker is deactivated or fired. Shaikh Salauddin from the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers put it succinctly when he said that "Gig workers spend hours trying to guess what the algorithm is doing and it feels like they are a rat in a maze". This is totally opposite to the idea of being one's own boss. A plain reading of the digitally generated terms and conditions that the worker has to invariably agree on to commence work dispels any notion of being an independent contractor. Every aspect of the work is monitored and dictated, with workers facing the consequences if they do not comply.



For representative purpose. ISTOCKPHOTO

The Karnataka Bill recognises the pervasive role played by such algorithms and makes the aggregator responsible for sharing the parameters that are used by the algorithm to determine allocation of work, grounds for denial of work, the categorisation of workers and how personal data of workers is being used to determine their ability to work and earn through the aggregator. The Bill breaks the algorithmic control the companies have and allows workers to take back control for at least some part of their work lives.

The myth of flexibility

The second myth that is perpetuated is that persons engaged in platform work enjoy flexible work arrangements. This assertion has enabled platforms to keep gig-based workers away from protections under labour laws. Multiple studies have shown how the term flexibility is abused in the industry. All flexibility in truth rests only with the employer and none with the worker. The payment structure consisting of a number of incentive schemes which enable workers to earn the minimum surplus required to cover costs, in effect, leaves no flexibility with the workers. For instance, workers have to comply with mandatory login hours to be eligible for incentives. If they log in after gaps of being 'inactive', they have to make peace with disadvantaged rate cards and incentive schemes.

Karnataka's draft Bill introduces provisions that mandate fair contracts, income security and the right of platform workers to refuse work without being slapped with sanctions. The above provisions strengthen the position of these workers who are at the same time not considered employees, nor do they enjoy the freedom and flexibility of being independent contractors.

The third myth is that these are 'part time' workers, who engage in platform-based gig work for additional income. According to a study of the platform economy in India by PAIGHAM and the University of Pennsylvania, 96% of the cab drivers surveyed, secured 100% of their daily income from gigs. The corresponding figure for delivery workers was 90.7%. Average daily work hours for taxi drivers was in excess of 11 hours, and 10 hours for delivery workers. By making social security a mandatory requirement, the Karnataka Law takes a necessary step towards acknowledging this fact and makes room for an umbrella of schemes that can assist workers through events such as old age, death, health shocks etc.

India's stand

Even though the Government of India endorsed a progressive statement on the rights of platform workers at the G-20 last year, it's Code on Social Security, which is the only legislation that makes a passing reference to gig workers, has been detrimental as it delinks workers from minimum labour protections of wages, occupational safety and health. Significantly, it is the State Governments that are showing the way forward. Rajasthan is the first State to pass a legislation on the issue, closely followed by Karnataka. Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Telangana are following suit.

In the political context of guarantees funded purely by the state exchequer, this law is an important development. It shows how social security for workers ought to also be financed from the market and that private actors should no longer be abdicated from their primary economic accountability towards workers. There are many things that could be improved in the Bill. These include the Bill's silence on critical issues such as minimum wage, occupational safety and health, working hours, and rights on collective bargaining. However, it is also true that this law allows workers to mobilise and assert for more.

Rakshita Swamy is Director, Social Accountability Forum for Action and Research and Biju Mathew is President, International Alliance of App Based Transport Workers.

READER'S MAIL

Traffic rule violations

Sir, – A few days back, the Police Commissioner said that they would take strict action against those drivers who violate one-way rule or drive on the wrong side of the road. However, there is scant implementation of this on Bugle Rock road at Basavanagudi, right from the Bull Temple signal to the Tagore Circle underpass. The cameras at the junction of WAT Road seem to have no effect. A police person deployed at each of the intersections on Bugle Rock road will help catch the violators.

G. Padmanabhan,
Bengaluru

Road in bad shape

Sir, – The Rustam Bagh Main Road (Ward no. 113) near the Deaf and Dumb school is in a pathetic condition with potholes and uneven surfaces, making it difficult for the vehicles as well as pedestrians, including the children attending the school, to drive or walk on the road. The road urgently needs repairs.Would the BBMP address the issue as soon as possible?

V. Padmanabhan,
Bengaluru

Repair roads around metro station

Sir, – While Chickpete Metro Station represents a modern mass transit system, the state of the roads surrounding it paints a very different image of the infrastructure that supports it. The whole A.S. Char Street leading to the station is in disrepair, with potholes, cracked and uneven surfaces, a road divider broken at several places, and no pavements. Other smaller roads and streets around the station are considerably worse: the slush and odour created by stagnant water, as well as remains of decaying fruits and vegetables littering the space occupied by wholesalers and retail vendors of these items, make walking and driving there a dangerous proposition. The BBMP appears to have abandoned the area. Will the authorities act on this, at least now?

Kamal Laddha,
Bengaluru

Readers can write to letters.bangalore@thehindu.co.in

Dhruv Patil says his appointment not linked to his father

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

He attributes it to his study of man-animal conflict and his achievements as a wildlife photographer

Dhruv Patil, who was recently nominated as a member of the State Wildlife Board, stated on Sunday that his appointment is unrelated to his father, Major Industries Minister M. B. Patil.

He has attributed his nomination to his work as a conservationist and wildlife photographer over the past eleven years. He was speaking to reporters at the Mamadapura protected forest area, where the organisation he heads– the Society for the Protection of Plants and Animals–in association with the Forest Department, had planted 1.36 lakh saplings two years ago as part of the Koti Vruksha Andolana initiative.

He elaborated on his study of man-animal conflict and his achievements as a wildlife photographer, including capturing rare images of black panther and tiger. He said that he has also filmed a documentary titled 'Wild Vijayapura'.

Judges have tried to make institutions more accessible to persons with disabilities: CJI

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

"We as judges have tried to make ourselves and our institutions more accessible to persons with disabilities. I have been chairing the e-Committee of the Supreme Court for the last five years and we have adopted six accessibility parameters," said Chief Justice of India (CJI), D.Y. Chandrachud on Saturday while speaking at The India Accessibility Summit and State commissioner for Persons with Disabilities Conclave.

He further said, "We have moved from visual captcha to audio captcha. We have worked with the National Institute of Visually Handicapped and the National Association for the Blind. We have 558 visually challenged staff in our district judiciary who have been trained by the staff of the e-Committee."

Social inclusion

He also advocated for a change from mental and physical rehabilitation to social and economic inclusion, sharing personal insights from his experience of raising two children with disabilities. The conclave was organised by Government of Karnataka in association with Ramaiah College of Law and the Association of People with Disability.

Along with the CJI, Supreme Court Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court N.V. Anjaria, Minister of Women and Child Development, Person with Disabilities and Senior Citizens Lakshmi Hebbalkar and others discussed the challenges faced and achievements secured by differently abled persons.

The minister discussed the significance of integrating people with disabilities into society and the necessity of early medical screenings to identify impairments.

She noted government assistance for operations and aid, as well as partnerships with hospitals. With over 90% of impaired students already enrolled in mainstream schools, she also emphasised the importance of inclusive education.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

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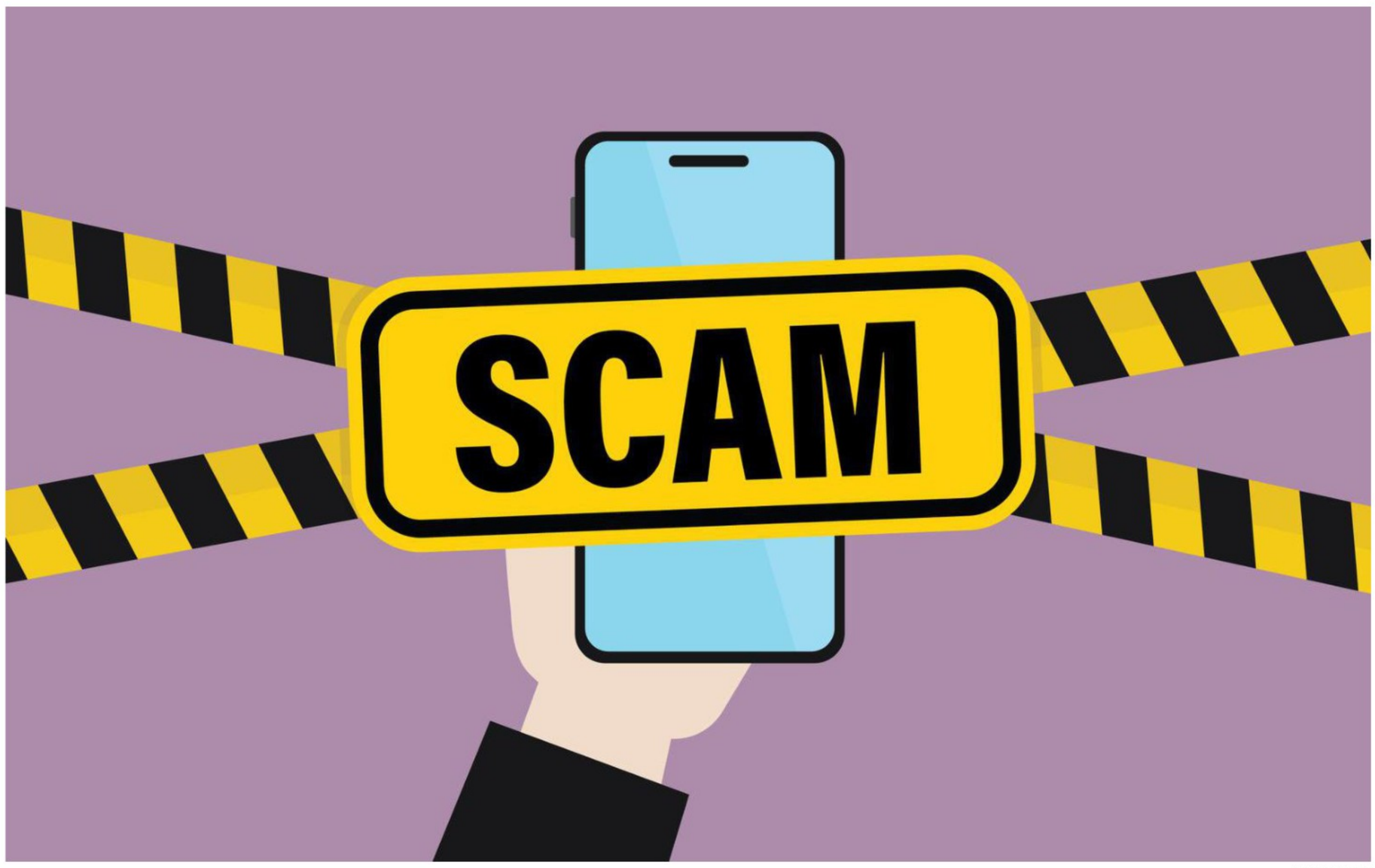

GETTY IMAGES

What are the various efforts being taken to mitigate caller ID spoofing?

Caller ID spoofing is a technique with which the phone number that a call appears to originate from can be falsified. Spoofing techniques have been honed by enthusiasts, telemarketers, and fraudsters alike, over the years

Karan Saini

Several friends and family members of mine received a call from a North American (+1) phone number which played a pre-recorded message informing them of a supposed court summons. I happened to receive a call from a +1 number too. I had also missed a domestic call shortly before the international one. While these automated calls are part of a well-known scam, looking at the phone numbers, I noticed that the Indian and North American phone numbers were identical to each other, save for their country codes. The Indian number was +91 98199 69857, and the American number was +1 (981) 996-9857.

What is caller ID spoofing?

Caller ID spoofing is a technique with which the phone number that a call appears to originate from can be falsified. On a technical level, caller ID spoofing is not difficult to perform. Spoofing techniques have been honed by enthusiasts, telemarketers, and fraudsters alike, over the years. Malicious individuals use caller ID spoofing primarily to shield their identity when engaging in illicit activity. At times, caller ID spoofing is used by these individuals to carry out social engineering attacks, where the spoofed caller ID is abused for the implicit trust that the receiving party associates with it. Caller ID spoofing can also be used to circumvent standard call blocking systems, and even for exploiting vulnerabilities in insecure Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems.

Caller ID spoofing in itself is perfectly legal in many jurisdictions, and as a result of this several companies offering caller ID spoofing services to customers around the world have popped up over the years, with the first commercial caller ID spoofing service launching in 2004.

Tackling scam calls

Caller ID spoofing is a costly affair for everyone involved. Telecommunication service providers lose revenue, users that are defrauded due to a scam call abusing a spoofed caller ID lose money, and law enforcement has a harder time investigating crimes where spoofed caller IDs are used. Caller ID spoofing is not a new phenomenon, and there have been several earnest technical efforts made for fixing the problem.

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is a special UN agency focused on improving and standardising global information and communication technologies. The ITU was originally established as the International Telegraph Union in 1865, much before the UN existed, and of which India has been a member since 1869 onward. In 2021, the ITU published a technical report on countering caller ID spoofing. While this report does not have any mandatory provisions, it does provide a reference using Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) based authentication which could be implemented by Indian telecom operators to fix caller ID spoofing for good.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) had earlier recommended to telecom operators to integrate a system known as Calling Name Presentation (CNAP), with the idea of allowing consumers to know who is calling them in a way similar to how applications such as TrueCaller do it, except CNAP would be mandatory, and caller names would appear as per KYC documents. A 2022 consultation paper on the project makes only a few mentions of caller ID spoofing, and does not provide a plan or technical measures for tackling the issue. It merely acknowledges in one sentence that caller ID spoofing is a problem that exists. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is reportedly in the process of launching a pilot of the CNAP project. Though it is not known whether CNAP will (or should) be implemented, it can be said that introducing such a system without first implementing a technical fix for caller ID spoofing will be a mistake.

According to news reports from May 2024, the DoT has devised a system to "identify and block" international calls with a manipulated Calling Line Identity (CLI) and has issued directions to telecom operators to prevent such calls from reaching subscribers.

However, considering that the problem has still not been fixed, it is unclear whether the system (technical details of which have not been furnished) is effective, or if it has even been implemented.

Government inaction

The Telecommunications Act, 2023 which was partially notified on June 26 of this year allows the Union Government to take over control and operation of any telecommunication service or network during times of "emergency." Section 20 of the Act empowers the Government to take "temporary possession of any telecommunication service or telecommunication network from an authorised entity" for "any public emergency, including disaster management, or in the interest of public safety." The Act has received criticism for being invasive and potentially increasing surveillance powers. That aside, it can be said that fixing caller ID spoofing would be "in the interest of public safety"; why then has the Government not taken action?

Fixing the technical and implementation problem of caller ID spoofing will have an outweighed impact for all stakeholders. For consumers, fixing caller ID spoofing will reduce spam and fraud calls, and will completely eliminate fraud that relies on false representation of one's identity via phone number. For telecommunications providers, it will save revenue that would otherwise be lost, and for the Government and therefore the public, it would result in revenue that would contribute to the Indian economy.

Karan Saini is a security engineer and researcher based in New Delhi, India

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on some of the important events that happened on July 26

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1

Two former Prime Ministers of these two countries, which are part of Oceania, were born on July 26. While one of them was the PM of this country between 1996 and 2007, the other was this country's third female PM between 2017 and 2023. Name the Prime Ministers and the counties.

QUESTION 2

This American actor born on July 26 has received numerous accolades including Academy Awards. Known for this political show called *House of Cards*, he was recently accused of sexual misconduct in 2017. Name the actor.

QUESTION 3

This Irish singer-songwriter died on this day last year. After converting to Islam in 2018, she adopted the name Shuhada' Sadaqat, while continuing to perform and record under her birth name. Identify her.

QUESTION 4

This is celebrated every year to observe India's victory over Pakistan, in a war that ended on July 26, 1999. What is it called?

QUESTION 5

This English writer was born on this day in 1894. His novels include *The Genius and the Goddess*, *Point Counter Point* and *Eyeless in Gaza*, among others. Name the writer.

Visual question:

Identify this American sportsperson born on July 26. What is the sport she was known for?

Questions and Answers to the July 26 edition of the daily quiz: 1. *The Tiger of Drass* is a biography of this Mahavir Chakra awardee. **Ans: Capt. Anuj Nayyar, MVC(P)**

2. The sub-sector west of the Siachen glacier was renamed after this Vir Chakra awardee's sacrifice. **Ans: Capt. Haneef Uddin, Vr C (P)**

3. The codename of the Indian Air Force operations during the Kargil War in 1999. **Ans: Operation Safed Safar**

4. The science block of the National Defence Academy is named after which Param Vir Chakra awardee of Kargil. **Ans: Capt. Manoj Pandey, PVC (P)**

5. Bikram Saluja portrayed which Vir Chakra awardee's role in the movie *LOC*. **Ans: Capt. Sanjeev Singh Jamwal, VrC**

6. This PVC awardee's code name was Shershah. **Ans: Capt. Vikram Batra, PVC**

7. The name of the Indian Navy operation launched in conjunction with Op Vijay in 1999. **Ans: Operation Talwar**

8. The Chief of Army Staff of India during the Kargil War. **Ans: Gen V. P. Malik**

Visual: The monument of this 'Batalik Hero' was established in 2007. **Ans: Capt. M. Saravanan, VrC**

Early Birds: Animesh Mohan| Tamal Biswas| Kaustubh Rana

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subramanian

"Difference between 'among' and 'amongst' (Chandra Mouli, Madras)."

"There is no difference. Fowler says that 'amongst is more usual before vowels.' 'Among' and 'amongst' must be followed by a plural noun or pronoun. They can also be followed by a group noun, singular in form, but plural in sense such as 'family,' 'crowd.'

I found him among his friends.

He loves to work amongst the weaker sections of society.

The girl was found among the crowd.

They are always quarrelling among themselves.

She is the most talented among her sisters.

You use 'among' when more than two persons or things are involved. 'Between' is 'used of people or things, either two in number or more than two considered individually.'

This is strictly between you and me.

There will be an interval of ten minutes between the acts (not between each act).

'Between' and not 'among' is used where three or more parties are considered to be in a close relationship.

Negotiations are going on between members of the European Common Market.

When you describe a triangular piece of land, you say the land is between three points and not among three points."

"Crapulent (S. K. Chaturvedi, Nagpur)."

" 'Crapulent' is a literary word which means 'feeling unwell as a result of eating or drinking too much.'

He drank like a fish last night and is in a crapulent state now.

The 'a' is pronounced like the 'a' in 'man' and 'u' like the 'u' in 'tube.'"

"Onomastics (G. Bapiah Gupta, Ponnur)."

" 'Onomastics' is 'the study of the origin and formation of (especially personal) proper names.' This is a plural noun treated as a singular. Onomastics is an interesting science. The adjective is 'onomastic.' The first 'o' is pronounced like the 'o' in 'got,' the second one like the 'a' in 'India,' the 'a' like the 'a' in 'man.' The stress is on the third syllable. It is from Greek 'onoma' which means a name."

"Meaning of 'to turn a blind eye' (G. Ravichandran, Bombay)."

" 'To turn a blind eye' means 'to take no notice (of an acton), stop oneself deliberately from becoming concerned.' When you turn a blind eye to something, you pretend not to have seen something, although you actually have. You do not let what you have seen affect you in any way because as far as you are concerned you have not seen anything!

Shanthi's behaviour at the party was outrageous. But her husband Ram turned a blind eye to everything.

Our new Vice-Chancellor is very strict He has asked us not to turn a blind eye to copying by students."

Published in The Hindu on October 20, 1992.

Word of the day

Parsimony:

extreme care in spending money; reluctance to spend money unnecessarily; extreme stinginess

Synonyms: thrift, penny-pinching, tightfistedness

Usage: *She was surprised by the parsimony of larger corporations.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/parsimonypro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈpɑː.sə.ˌməʊ.ni/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

DC promises action over Nanjangud guest house issue

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Deputy Commissioner of Mysuru Lakshmikant Reddy has promised to initiate disciplinary action against officials responsible for keeping the government guest house in Nanjangud locked during the visit of Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy to the temple town on Sunday.

The Deputy Commissioner's assurance comes in the wake of media reports on the guest house in Nanjangud remaining locked when Mr. Kumaraswamy, who was on a visit to Srikanteshwara temple in the town, reached the guest house to rest for a brief while.

In a statement here, the Deputy Commissioner said the matter had come to the notice of the district administration and will be viewed seriously. An inquiry will be conducted and the disciplinary action as per law will be taken against the officials responsible.

Correction

The deck headline of a news report on Page 2 of the July 28 edition should have read: 'Total estimated cost of the project is around ₹12,000 crore. However, there is no word on how the project will be funded', and not as published.

Water level in the Krishna continues to rise

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Despite rainfall subsiding in south-west Maharashtra, Belagavi and surrounding areas, water levels in the Krishna continued to rise due to increased water release from various bridges and barrages in the river basin.

Officials increased outflow from the Lal Bahadur Shastri Reservoir over the Krishna at Almatti in Bagalkot district to 3.25 lakh cusecs on Sunday.

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BJP-JD(S) to take out padayatra over MUDA, Valmiki corpn. issues

Many senior leaders are expected to take part in the seven-day march from Bengaluru to Mysuru starting on August 3

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The NDA allies BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) will take out a seven-day padayatra from Bengaluru to Mysuru from August 3 against the alleged irregularities in site distribution by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), financial irregularities in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd., and diversion of funds meant for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The padayatra will culminate with a public rally in Mysuru on August 10 in which BJP's central leaders will also take part. Senior leaders of the alliance, including former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy, will be part of the padayatra.

The decision and modalities of padayatra were finalised after a coordination committee meeting between leaders of the two parties in which Mr. Kumaraswamy and his ministerial colleague Pralhad Joshi, among others, were present. "We discussed the two alleged scams in detail and decided on the padayatra," State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra told presspersons here on Sunday. Incidentally, the padayatra will pass through the JD(S) strongholds in the Vokkaliga heartland of Ramanagara, Mandya, and Mysuru districts. Mr. Yediyurappa said the padayatra would attract thousands of people and appealed to people to participate in big numbers to remove the "corrupt" government.

"The protest will continue till the Chief Minister resigns. The issue has already been discussed in Parliament. The Chief Minister should resign if he has some honour," he said.

The ruling and Opposition parties had clashed over the same issues during the just-concluded monsoon session of the State legislature where BJP and JD (S) members were denied permission to raise the alleged irregularities in MUDA, triggering a night-long dharna in the legislature by the Opposition. The legislature proceedings were stormy during the discussion on the Valmiki development corporation irregularities. The Opposition had indicated that they could take out a padayatra after their attempts to discuss these issues were not allowed in full.

JD(S) leader and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy with BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, and other leaders during the BJP-JD(S) coordination meeting in Bengaluru on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

HDK taken to hospital after nosebleed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday evening was rushed to a private hospital here after a nosebleed during a press conference with BJP leaders.

JD(S) sources said the Union Minister underwent a thorough check-up before being discharged. "He is on blood thinners and possibly the nosebleed was owing to cracks in the nose. Since he has cardiac issues, we did not want to leave anything to chance. All tests were conducted and he was discharged later," party sources said.

State will benefit from Budget schemes: FM

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following criticism of the Union Budget by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday defended the Centre's financial allocation to Karnataka and said that many of the large projects announced in the Budget would bring benefits to the State.

She told presspersons here that the venture capital fund for space start-ups would help those associated with ISRO in Bengaluru while the abolition of the angel tax would also help start-ups here. "Karnataka will benefit from high-value agri tech, and the University of Agricultural Sciences in Bengaluru and Raichur will benefit from funding for research. Climate-resilient seeds would be provided for north Karnataka which is affected by the vagaries of nature. Bengaluru will benefit from the cluster-based vegetable production scheme." She also listed out many other large schemes that could bring benefits to Bengaluru and Karnataka.

State's expectations

While Mr. Siddaramaiah had listed out Karnataka's expectations from the Budget that were not met, Ms. Sitharaman gave details of the tax devolution, grants in aid, and other financial assistance to the State. She, however, did not delve into the question of Karnataka not getting an AIIMS and not receiving funds for the Upper Bhadra project and Bengaluru Peripheral Ring Road project, among others, that have been raised by the Congress government. To a question on these issues, she said, "I have read out a lot of things that I have given for Karnataka."

Tax devolution, grants

Stating that a lot of misinformation on tax devolution and grants in aid, among others, was being spread in Karnataka by the State government, she said, "It is completely false. While Karnataka received ₹81,791 crore in tax devolution between 2004 and 2014 when the UPA was in power, the State received ₹2,36,955 crore between 2014 and 2024 under the NDA government. In grants in aid, the State received ₹60,779 crore during the UPA regime while it received ₹2,36,955 crore during the NDA government." From 2020-2021 till now, including the allocation in the 2024-2025 Budget, Karnataka will receive ₹10,041 crore 50-year interest-free loan, she added.

'CM has to take responsibility for ST corporation scam'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

On Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's demand for accountability of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki ST Development Corporation Ltd.'s irregularities, she said, "He can say. He is quite used to talking like this. His hallmark is more than good governance; he speaks like this."

She said the State government should have taken action if bank officials had taken the money. "You should punish them if they have done wrong. You should have arrested the bank officials if they had swindled the government's money. Then you have the right to blame the Centre and seek Nirmala Sitharaman's resignation. I have no problem if you take [arrest] bank officials if they have done wrong." She also said the Chief Minister has to take responsibility for the scam.

On the steps taken by the Centre, she said, "Action has been taken against conniving officials in the bank and I want them to be punished. Lawful action will be taken against them and no protection will be offered to them." By accepting the scam, the Chief Minister has conceded on the floor of the House, she said, adding that the government had denied it initially.

An ode to mother Cauvery

GUEST COLUMN

D.K. Shivakumar

D.K. Shivakumar

Rain gods have finally smiled on Karnataka, soothing the parched lands, streams, and rivers yearning for the elixir of life. Mother Cauvery has once again come to life in all her glory. She is brimming with water giving hopes of prosperity to millions of people in her path and quenching the thirst of the neighbouring State as well. It is my good fortune that I have the opportunity to offer the traditional 'bagina' to her on behalf of the people of the State.

The people of the Cauvery basin, including Bengaluru, were struggling for every drop of drinking water, let alone water for irrigation, thanks to severe drought in the State. Goddess Chamundeshwari has blessed us with copious rains and the smiles are back.

To pay our obeisance to Mother Cauvery, our government, led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, will offer the 'bagina' on Monday. It is an auspicious occasion for us to be paying respect to our lifelines at the Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) and Kabini reservoirs.

Cauvery is not just a river for us. She is an emotion, and she is a devotion. Daughter of King Kavera and wife of Agasthya Maharshi, Cauvery took birth in the Brahmagiri hills of Kodagu. Kodavas revere the Cauvery as their mother and *kula devathe*. The Kodava culture is full of traditions and rituals praising her. Panje Mangesh Rao, a well-known poet from Kodagu, has praised her in his poems. Such is the importance of the Cauvery that great literary works such as the *Kavirajamarga* of Sri Vijaya identify Karnataka with her.

Legacy of KRS

The Wadiyars of Mysuru highly revered Mother Cauvery. It was the monumental foresight, determination, and effort of Maharaja Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar, Sir M. Visvesvaraya, and others in the Mysuru kingdom that gave birth to Kannambadi or what is popularly known as the KRS. The construction of this reservoir started in 1911 and ended in 1932. More than 10,000 workers sweated it out to build this reservoir, which continues to water lakhs of acres and quench the thirst of crores of people.

Nadaprabhu Kempegowda laid the foundation for Bengaluru 500 years ago. Perhaps he was aware that it would go on to become a global metropolis. He built over 300 lakes to fulfil the water needs of the town. As the city grew, the lakes shrunk, and it was no more water self-sufficient. That is when Cauvery water was pumped to Bengaluru city from a distance of 100 km. Cauvery water quenches the thirst of more than a crore people of Bengaluru today.

Save water

The Cauvery isn't just water; it is the lifeline of our region. The recent water crisis has demonstrated that every drop of water is precious. Given the uncertainties around climate change, it is our bounden duty to conserve water. Be it for drinking purposes or irrigation, we need to be mindful of the use of water. Our government is also creating awareness about water conservation.

We have decided to organise 'Cauvery Aarti' on the lines of the Ganga Aarti in Varanasi. We believe this is just a small token of our obeisance to the mother who continues to feed us and nurture us.

(The author is Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president)

Shivakumar appeals to Ministers to visit flood-affected areas

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee president D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday appealed to his ministerial colleagues to visit flood-hit areas and attend to flood relief works.

"Karnataka is experiencing heavy rains and most of the reservoirs are full. Rivers are in spate. There have been reports of damage to property, crops, and livestock. In this distress, it is our duty to stand with our people," Mr. Shivakumar said.

'Attend to problems'

"I appeal my Cabinet colleagues to visit flood-affected areas in their constituencies and other areas and attend to people's problems. ... We are receiving good rains this year, but the rains have also created problems in some areas. As elected representatives, we need to stand with the people of the State," he said.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

Bobby Sista

March 26, 1931 – July 27, 2024

Mr Shambhu V. Sista, (Bobby Sista)
loving husband, father and grandfather,
and founder and chairman of Sista's Private Limited,
passed away peacefully on July 27, 2024, at the age of 93.
In keeping with his wishes, there was no funeral.
He touched the lives of many and
will be remembered as he was - kind, gentle yet outgoing.

He is survived by his children, Subhadra and Apu,
his son-in-law George, and his grandchildren,
Sonia, Zaki and Sheehan.

We miss you Nanna. We miss you Thatha.

KMF Karnataka Co-Operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited
KMF Complex, Dr. M. H. Marigowda Road, DRC Post, Bangalore-560 029.
Tel: 080-25536625 / 25536789 Fax: 080-25536105

IFT No: KMF/ENGG/Mother Diary-T-fit/1911/2024-25 Date: 26-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION
[Two cover System] [Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only]

Karnataka Milk Federation Ltd; Bangalore invites tender from the eligible manufacturers/ authorised dealer through KPP Portal for the works mentioned in the table below.The interested manufacturers/contractors who have handled similar kind of works may participate in the tender as indicated below, by logging on to website https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in and also contact Help desk E-mail; hphelpdesk.blr@intarvo.com and helpline no. 080-25501227/ 25501216.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Qty	EMD in Rs.	Period of completion
1	Design, Supply and Installation of T-fit Insulations for chilled water and milk/product pipe line at Milk processing and packing section at Mother Dairy, Yelahanka	1 Job	50,000	3 Months

1. Tender schedules may be downloaded from dated: 29-07-2024 to 12-08-2024 up to 4.00 pm.
2. Last date for Tender submission on date: 13-08-2024 up to 4.00 pm
3. Tender [Part 1] to be opened on date: 16-08-2024 at 4:30 pm.

For Karnataka Co-Op. Milk Federation Ltd.,
Sd/- Director [Engineering-2]

PUBLIC NOTICE

I hereby bring to the notice of general public that my clients Mrs. Noelene Noronha, **Ms. Jessica Christine Noronha and Andrea Rebecca Noronha**, all residing at No. 2/8, Madhukunj Apartments, Flat–B, Atrillery Road, Gowtham Puram, Ulsoor, HAL 2nd Stage, Bangalore – 560008, are the joint owners of Apartment morefully described in the Schedule written hereunder and hereinafter called as Schedule Property. My client informed to me that they have lost all the original documents pertaining to Schedule Property including the original sale deed dated 29.01.1994 executed by **Mr. Chandulal Bhatija** in favour of **Mr. Xavier Noronha, Mrs. Noelene Noranha and Mr. Arun Noranha** registered as document No. 3369/93-94, pages 9-15, Volume -3527 of Book-I, in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Shivajinagar, Bangalore and the same are could not be traced or found. Under the circumstances my clients have obtained certified copy of the above sale deed.

The General Public are required to take note of the above. Anyone holding the above original sale deed or any other original documents of Schedule Property and claiming any interest over the Schedule Property based on the aforesaid original documents and sale deed shall inform in writing within 15 days from the date of this notice to the undersigned and thereafter no claims shall be entitled.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of Residential Apartment bearing No. A, Municipal No. 2/8-1, PID No. 75-61-2/8-1, on Ground Floor of the building "MADHU KUNJ", No. 2/8, Artillery Road, No. 63, Bangalore–560008 measuring 987.33Sq.ft with 21.54 Sq.ft of Plinth area and bounded on the **East by:** Remaining Portion of No. 2/2, **West by:** Artillery Road, **North by:** Private Property and **South by:** Common passage.

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KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
OFFICE OF THE, Executive Engineer, KNNL, HBC Divn., Athani – 591304, Tq: Athani. Dist: Belgaum (Karnataka).

No./KNNL/HBC/PB/TND/2024-25/ 1245 Date: 22.07.2024

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through kpp-portal only)

Percentage tenders are invited as per KW-4 in Two cover system for below mentioned Work on from eligible tenderers, for the works detailed below by the undersigned.

On behalf of the Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru, the Executive Engineer, KNNL, HBC Division Athani, invites percentage basis tender from interested, experienced and resourceful civil contractors from KPWD Class II and Above Contractors who fulfill the pre-qualification criteria for the bellow mentioned work.

The two cover bid submission procedure as per Rule 28 of KTPP Act shall be followed The bidders are requested to submit their bids in two cover system including EMD in e-cash. The first cover (Technical Bid) should contain the documents as mentioned in Para 4, The second cover shall contain the financial bid. The cover-I (Technical bid) will be opened first. Thereafter cover-II (financial bid) of only those bidders who have fulfill the conditions contained in Para.4 will be opened.

The blank tender documents can be obtained through website and can be submitted through electronic tender only.

The approximate estimated cost of work is 1) Rs. 397.29 Lakhs

1:The contractor can request for e-tendering documents: From 29.07.2024 @ 10.30 AM to 05.08.2024. upto 4.00 PM,2:Last date & time for tender queries:03.08.2024 upto 4.00 PM,3:Pre bid meeting will be held in the office of the EE HBC Division Athani:02.08.2024.2024 at 11.00 AM. 4:Submission of completed e-tendering document:From 29.07.2024 @ 10.30 AM to 05.08.2024. upto 4.00 PM, 5:Opening of Technical Bid at EE KNNL HBC Division Athani: 07.08.2024 @ 11.00 AM, 6:Opening of Financial Bid at EE KNNL HBC Division Athani :09.08.2024 @ 11.00 AM (Or after Approval of Technical Bid), 7:Date for Producing original document @ EE KNNL HBC Division Athai:08.08.2024 @ 11.00 AM.

Any other information can be had from the undersigned during the office hours on telephone: 08289-251034 and H.P company helpline 080-22485867

Sd/-Praveen .B. Hunashikatti.
Executive Engineer, KNNL HBC Division, Athani

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-473/KSMCA/2024-25

How will the cess on movie tickets, OTT subscriptions help workers and artistes in distress in Karnataka?

The Karnataka Cine and Cultural Activists (Welfare) Bill, 2024, passed by the Legislature on June 26, proposes establishing a fund to provide social security to film and theatre workers and artistes

Yemen S.
BENGALURU

Beyond the glitz and glamour of cinema, there are untold stories of thousands of artistes and workers of the industry who have little to fall back on as they age or face financial difficulties due to health issues or other reasons.

To address the issue, the Karnataka government last week announced that it is considering a cess on movie tickets and OTT subscription fees to support cinema and cultural artistes in distress. The cess ranging from 1-2% will be revised by the State government every three years if implemented. This cess will apply to cinema tickets, subscription fees, and revenue generated from the related establishments in Karnataka. The State government also said that it plans to extend the cess to plays staged within Karnataka.

Thousands of daily wagers

These are part of the provisions of the Karnataka Cine and Cultural Activists (Welfare) Bill, 2024, passed by the Legislature on June 26. The Bill envisages constituting a welfare board and establishing a fund for financing schemes to provide social security to cine and cultural activists in the State.

The welfare cess would be called "The Cine and Cultural Activists Welfare Cess." Cine and cultural activists registered under the Board would be eligible to file a petition before an office, to be designated by the government, in relation to any grievances arising out of entitlements. The Bill would benefit about 60,000 to 70,000 workers engaged in cine and other cultural fields, Labour Minister Santosh Lad has said.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Lad said, "There are many daily wagers in the cine and arts field like dancers, extras, spotters, stunt men, make-up artistes and more who hardly get any welfare schemes and are paid very little. We decided to bring in this Bill out of our very own experiences and stories heard from the industry. I had come across a very old woman cine artiste, she had told me how during the fag end of her life she had nobody to look after her and she was also low on finances. We could not help her then, but now the Bill has been tabled in the assembly, and I am sure it will go through."

He said that this will also help the theatre community. "Theatre artistes do not have a commercial mindset as they put their passion before anything. This Bill will serve their welfare," he added.

When asked if levying cess would impact cinema goers or the daily collection, Lad said it would be a very nominal amount charged. "We have got around 2.2 billion ticket per day market in our country, and we are the largest cinema goers in the world. In Karnataka we have about 550-600 theatres, so 1-2% cess on tickets would be anywhere between 25 paise - ₹2 per ticket, which is very nominal. Along with the cess collected, funds will be provided by the State, which will go to the welfare of the artists."

Rahul (name changed), a stunt man working in the film industry for over a decade, says a lot of schemes have come and gone, but there is no guarantee that it will reach them. "As stuntmen, we can access our health facilities only when something serious happens. But for smaller injuries we end up bearing the cost. Safety is still a concern. It is only after the infamous Anil and Uday incident, where these two actors lost their lives performing a stunt and actor Duniya Vijay almost lost his life with them in 2016, that our safety was given some priority. But it is still a risky job. Through levying cess, we hope the money will reach us. It would help if the government could help us get better safety equipment and easy access to medical services," he said.

J. Lokesh, ex-chairperson of Karnataka Nataka Academy, says, "Theatre is still a struggling art form in Karnataka. Tickets for most Kannada plays in a city like Bengaluru are priced at about ₹200, and yet there are very few theatre-goers, and the teams are in debt." FILE PHOTO

Simplify process

Karthik B. (name changed), a gaffer (head lighting technician) and a cinematographer in the industry, says the government must focus on making the process of obtaining artiste cards easier. "There are many light boys who work under me, and for many of them it is hard to obtain an artiste card. An artiste card is issued by an association or an union that is certified by the government. These cards help with claiming medical insurance or receiving payments or daily wages on time. But many still do not have cards because the issuers expect a bribe. If an artiste is not able to obtain a simple card, what is the guarantee that these welfare funds will reach us? Even in times of the pandemic, we were given coupons to a retail store instead of wages to run our families. We do not have a strong light men's union in Karnataka unlike other states, which is what we need badly now."

A massive set of the film *KGF* at Kolar Gold Fields. FILE PHOTO

N.M. Suresh, Chairman of Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC), feared that the levying of cess will only be a burden to producers. "The implementation of cess will help labourers, but will be a burden for producers who are already paying multiple taxes. Also, there is an existing welfare fund already for film labourers." Suresh says that a letter has been issued to the government objecting to its decision and seeking bifurcation of the welfare cess and what are the categories of artists who will benefit from it.

However, there are many who feel that such an initiative is welcome if streamlined well. Actor Prakash Raj says that the move is good as long as it is sustainable. "If it is going to benefit the artistes it is a good move. If they are taking funds from the industry and empowering people from the industry it is fair enough. I believe that everything must not be the government's responsibility and all of us should be considered as partners." He however adds that the government must make sure that sustainability is built in. "Whether it is cinema, OTT or theatre, all of us in the industry must contribute," he adds.

Film, television and theatre director, producer and writer B. Suresha concurs. "The thought behind implementing cess on the grounds of welfare of artistes is a great move. But this has been in incubation for several years and nothing has taken shape. The issue is that currently the entertainment taxes are going to the Central government. The State government must figure out how the funds will come back to them, to facilitate whatever they wish to."

He says that the government must streamline the process and take it through a union instead of a law being implemented., "Kerala has a nice model where there is a trade union for artists, wherever the artists perform they pay a sum to the union for every performance or earning. This helped many artists during the pandemic, the union gave them salaries despite performance spaces being shut down. A similar model can be implemented for theatre artists," Suresha adds.

Concerns of theatre persons

On the other hand, the theatre community in Karnataka argues that levying cess on theatrical performances would be unfair. J. Lokesh, ex-chairperson of Karnataka Nataka Academy, says, "Theatre is still a struggling art form in Karnataka. Tickets for most Kannada plays in a city like Bengaluru are priced at about ₹200, and yet there are very few theatre-goers, and the teams are in debt. Levying cess would mean an increase in ticket price, and losing the audience... Firstly, the government must make sure the existing funds and schemes are easily accessible for artists."

Senior theatre artist B.V. Rajaram says, "Theatre is not a platform where statistical investment is made and profit is gained unlike cinema or OTT. Theatre is a tool to promote the language, history and culture of Karnataka. We as theatre makers are already paying tax in the form of GST, levying cess will just be an addition to the existing burdens."

Film and theatre artiste and founder of Ranga Shankara Arundhati Nag says theatre is a social service and the government must cover welfare without charging the community. "Taxing on cinema and OTT is fair enough because they are businesses. Theatre, especially amateur theatre and other smaller modules of performing arts where the ticket rates are so low, it is a miracle that theatre still exists. The government must cover health and other services to artists without charging the theatre community."

ISRO conducts experimental flight of air-breathing propulsion system

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

RH 560 sounding rocket, on which the air-breathing propulsion system was mounted. FILE PHOTO

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully carried out the second experimental flight for the demonstration of air-breathing propulsion technology.

The second experimental flight for the demonstration of air-breathing propulsion technology was carried out at 7 a.m. on July 22.

The propulsion systems were symmetrically mounted on either side of a RH-560 Sounding Rocket and launched from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

RH-560 is a two-stage, solid motor based sub-orbital rocket that is designed to be utilised as a cost-effective flying test bed for the demonstration of advanced technologies. It is the heaviest sounding rocket in the ISRO's family of sounding rockets, and is launched from Sriharikota.

According to ISRO, the flight test achieved satisfactory performance of the sounding rocket along with successful ignition of the air-breathing propulsion systems. Nearly 110 parameters were monitored during the flight to assess its performance. The flight data from the mission will be useful for the next phase of development of air-breathing propulsion systems.

Prior to the mission, multiple ground tests were carried out at Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), and at the CSIR -National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL), Bengaluru.

Randstad India inaugurates cloth bag vending machine as part of its CSR initiative

The cloth vending machine will provide a more sustainable alternative to cheap plastic bags

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Randstad India, a talent company, took a significant step towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) of nature conservation and sustainability by unveiling Karnataka's first free cloth bag vending machine, Insta Bag, at Neravu Kiosk, near Dispensary Road, Commercial Street, Bengaluru on July 26.

"The Insta Bag project is designed to reduce plastic waste by providing easy access to eco-friendly cloth bags, encouraging citizens to adopt sustainable practices," said a press release.

The inauguration of the vending machine is a part of Randstad India's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts to combat climate change and promote a sustainable future.

Inauguration of cloth bag vending machine in Commercial Street.

Greener alternative

Being located on Commercial Street one of the major shopping hubs in Bengaluru, with its plethora of store options, the cloth vending machine will provide a more greener and sustainable alternative to cheap plastic bags.

Viswanath P.S., MD & CEO, Randstad India, emphasized the company's dedication to creating a positive environmental impact, "The launch of Insta Bag reflects our ongoing commitment to sustainability and our proactive approach to addressing environmental challenges. By making cloth bags readily available through the vending machine, we aim to reach out to more people, encouraging them to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives. "

Conservation

Vishwanath emphasized how small actions can lead to a significant change towards a more greener future. " Our goal is to inspire and empower the community to join us in our mission to combat climate change and promote environmental conservation."

The inauguration event was attended by eminentguests, including the Commissioner of Police, Bengaluru, Dayanand B.; Deputy Commissioner of Police, Kshma Mishra; Joint Director of Parihar NGO, Rani Shetty; Akshata Bhadranna, founder of Green Mic; and ACP - East, Geetha.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 29, 1974

Rs. 11 Crore Family Planning Project

Bangalore, July 28: The Rs. 11 Crore 'India population project' designed to strengthen the family planning services in the five districts of the Bangalore Revenue Division, has reached the take off stage and the impact of the project would be felt in the areas covered in the next six months. According to State Government sources, many preliminary works connected with the project had been completed in the last one year. Experts of the World Bank, which had agreed to give assistance to the project to the tune of Rs. 7.4 crore, who were recently here, had expressed satisfaction at the progress made by the project. The project had also secured a Swedish grant of Rs. 3.67 crores.

Need for Police Re-organisation

Bangalore, July 28: The Social Welfare Minister, Mr. N. Rachaiah, stressed the need for re-organising the police force at the taluk and district levels to cope with the situation arising out of the social and political awakening among rural masses.

Speaking at a function got up by the Road Safety Association, Mr. Rachaiah said that the police force was inadequate to deal with the problems in villages. Consequently crime detection and checking of social injustices perpetrated in rural areas suffered, he said.

Mr. Rachaiah drew the attention of police officers to the scant respect shown by auto-rickshaw drivers for road rates, which made the roads very unsafe.

CITYBEATS

India at a glance

ONGOING
Meena Bazaar is a 10-day exhibition of artefacts and decorative items. The exhibition, inaugurated by lifestyle influencer Navmita Jyoti on July 26, is organised by Grand Flea Market. There are artefacts from across the country, in a riot of colours, most of which have been created by artisans from rural areas.
At Chitrakala Parishath till August 4, entry is free.

High five

JULY 28
Samatva Foundation presents its fifth edition of Samatva Varshikothsava, its annual day celebrations. The day-long event commences at 9.45am, and will feature performances by Suma Sudhindhra, Mysore V Srikanth, Anoor R and others.
At Samskrita Bharathi Aksharam, Girinagar. Call 9880424442 / 9880091624 for details.

Bowled over

ONGOING
Sanchez and Sriracha have launched a new lunch bowl menu. Curated by chef Vikas Seth, burrito bowls come layered with Mexican rice, your choice of protein, cheese, sour cream and beans at Sanchez, while Cantonese prawns bowls or chicken Thai curry bowl are the order of the day at Sriracha.
Unit no 21 & 22, Manyata Embassy Business Park.

'Magic fosters critical thinking'

Bengaluru-based master of illusion Nakul Shenoy, talks about what drew him to the field, children being the toughest audience, and more

Praveen Sudevan

Blink and miss Mentalist Nakul Shenoy. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Bengaluru-based mentalist and magician Nakul Shenoy has mesmerised audiences ranging from corporate elites to cultural icons including Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia. Yet, last week, he stepped into a realm far more challenging than any grand stage: a classroom of sceptical high schoolers at Suburban Higher Secondary School during the Kovai Bookalatta Children's Literary Festival in Coimbatore.

"Kids are the toughest audience because they call you out if they think you're doing something tricky. Unlike adults, who might just suspect you put something in your pocket, kids will shout it out, putting pressure on you," he says. Despite this, a forest of hands shot up when he asked who wanted to be a magician.

For Nakul, this moment was particularly poignant. He became a magician (and later, a mentalist) after watching a magic show by the renowned Prof. Shankar in Udupi. Now, standing before a room of potential young magicians, the circle felt complete.

From a five-year-old draping a bath towel like a cape and casting imaginary spells, inspired by his comic book hero, Mandrake, Nakul has transformed into one of India's leading mentalists and magicians. He has delivered high-impact, mind-reading experiences across Asia, the Middle East, Europe, UK, and the USA. With 10 TEDx Talks and numerous television appearances to his credit, Nakul has solidified his reputation as a master of illusion and perception.

He talks to *The Hindu* about magic, mentalism, pseudoscience and more.

Excerpted interview:-

In the age of YouTube, where anyone can learn about magic and mentalism, how challenging is it to amaze your audience?
If I buy something from a store or watch another magic trick, and perform it as it is, it's very easy to catch. Good performers, whether in magic or mentalism, mostly create their own acts. We use the same techniques that have been around for perhaps a thousand years. But we change them, bring our creativity into it, give them a facelift, and perform them with our own talk, setting, and storyline.

What is the difference between magic and mentalism?
Magic is about the impossible – producing something from nothing, vanishing objects, or transforming one object into another. It defies the laws of science.

Psychic entertainment, or mentalism, deals with the improbable. It explores psychology and body language, making you question if someone can control your thoughts or read your mind. It's about creating a grey area where things seem plausible but aren't real powers.

As a performer, I aim to make sceptics question their disbelief and believers understand that it's all entertainment, not real powers. This balance keeps the audience engaged and curious.

Would you classify mentalism and magic as a skill or talent?
When I started, there were very few mentalists. Today, many magicians call themselves mentalists, at least for marketing. This means I have to stand out. My background in communications, my interest in psychology, and me being a sceptic - all these elements shape my on-stage persona, which is unique.

As a sceptic, how do you use your skills to debunk pseudoscientific claims?
I met Premanandji (the rationalist Basava Premanand) in the early 2000s. He signed a book for me with the words, "Don't let godmen misuse magic." This message has guided me. I take on pseudoscience and gullibility at every opportunity.

Society often clutches at straws, whether spiritual or scientific. For instance, kids are now being fingerprinted to predict their future abilities. It's like a modern horoscope. This can harm a child's potential by limiting their aspirations. It's up to us to expose these frauds and encourage questioning. My shows aim to train audiences to question everything.

It seems these so-called godmen also learn the same tricks as magicians do but they misuse it...
Actually, any magician, even those performing at birthday parties, often face unfair judgement. People think they only do a few tricks, but these magicians are highly skilled. They have years of experience in performing illusions like cutting and restoring ropes or making objects vanish and reappear. In contrast, a Baba or Godman might only know one way to produce holy ash. The difference is that godmen rely on belief, while magicians rely on skill.

Do you use your mentalism skills in your everyday life with people?
There are trainers who teach skills like instant rapport-building to impress someone on a first date. That does work sometimes. But you can't sustain a relationship with deception and manipulation. The most genuine thing we can do is be ourselves. That's the best way to make lasting connections.

As a hypnotist and communication specialist, I've honed skills in building rapport, reading people, memory, and observation. These abilities have become second nature to me. However, it doesn't mean I'm constantly trying to read minds–I'd go mad like Rain Man if I did!

There are benefits to learning magic. I was quite shy, but these skills have transformed me. Now, I can confidently speak to thousands. Also, it fosters scepticism and critical thinking.

Right. But since you are in the profession of deception, do people have trust issues with you?
The issue isn't whether people doubt you; it's when they start believing you. As a mentalist, people might see you as someone who can solve their problems, like a real mind reader. That's a problem because I'm an entertainer, not a psychologist. I've received calls and emails from people seeking help for serious issues like depression, thinking I can read minds and help them. I always tell them to see a trained medical practitioner or psychologist, not rely on me. It's important to be transparent and not cross into areas one is not qualified for.

Clocking time for a creative pursuit

Chitra Narayanan

A few years ago around Christmas time, entrepreneur Chocko Valliappa, founder of Vee Technologies, a business process and operations consulting company, was in Norway for a meeting. He was an hour early so to kill time, he strolled into a store that looked invitingly festive. Inside, he saw a cheerful red circular carpet with a border fringed with a pattern of children holding hands. "I could see a clock in that carpet," says Valliappa, who picked it up without hesitation.

Back in his home in Bengaluru, Valliappa designed a wall clock with the carpet, sandwiching it between glass. When visitors walk into Valliappa's apartment on Palace road, the bright red timepiece leaps to attention, instantly drawing the eye.

But that's not the only artistic clock. The apartment if filled with intriguing time pieces. Taking up most of the wall behind the dining table is a rectangular tie and dye circle patterned fabric with a clock in the centre.

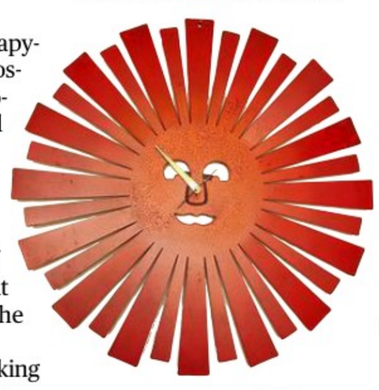
"This was a bedsheet I spotted in a local market - my wife was surprised to see me picking it up and asked me what I want it for," grins Valliappa.

Moving hands Chocko Valliappa with one of his creations, (below) the Happy Sun clock. THE HINDU

The hobby horologist's latest purchase is a cobweb from a hoodoo store in the US. "Can you imagine paying $300 dollars for a cobweb?" he asks. "It is a real cobweb imprinted on a velvet cloth. It will be a great backdrop for a clock," he says.

Time travel

From an Egyptian papyrus and Broadway posters to a striking photograph of the Eiffel tower, Valliappa has crafted clocks on unusual backgrounds and his apartment is a veritable museum of these time pieces that transport you from the US to Paris to Africa.



One of his most striking pieces is a gorgeous art work featuring a Madonna-faced woman in red on which Valliappa has projected time through cleverly fitted projectors on the roof.

"I picked up this art work in Chitra Santhe, the annual art carnival in Bengaluru," he says.

For the fourth generation scion of the family of textile king Karumuttu Thiagarajar Chettiar horology was always a hobby but he embraced clock-making passionately 10 years ago. Now his offices, homes and the college the family runs are all embellished with his works. "I must have made about 50 clocks to date," he says, pointing to his tiny studio set in his apartment, where more works are in progress.

Valliappa's personal favourite is the clock on his office table – a yellowish Jaisalmer marble piece on which he has placed a barometer, on which the time is projected. "Watches - especially smart watches have so many dimensions. They can tell so many other things besides time. With the barometer I have tried a multi-dimension clock," he says.

Inspiration can strike from anywhere, says the well-read, widely travelled Valliappa, who shuttles between Delhi, Bengaluru and Salem. His social media posts are filled with pictures of interesting clocks he has sighted - an ancient building in Washington DC atop which stands a gorgeous clock marking time through the ages, and an antique clock in Duluth among others.

Given his obsession with clocks is he punctual? Says his friend, Vikram Ponappa, restoration architect and photographer, "Whether it's a very laid-back Sunday at 4 pm with the Gutter Gang (a group of six who have known Chocko for a long time and used to meet outside and sit in a clean gutter) or a Zoom meeting or work meeting, I have never known Chocko not to keep time."

He adds with a grin, "Chocko calls his hobby Klockology, but we call it Chockology."

(The writer is an Editorial Consultant with The Hindu Business Line)

Poetry in motion Rudraprasad Swain and Ananya Parida at one of their performances. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

A celebration of universality

Bangalore International Centre, on July 30, is set to host an Odissi recital – a reimagined composition of the traditional dance form.

This presentation, characterised by themes of blossoming, evolution, and joy, will highlight the universality of celebration through each composition. The performance will encompass divinity, art and sculptures, space, emotions, and the act of surrendering, ultimately celebrating the rich Sampradāya of Odissi.

Complementing the live performance, audio-visuals and archival recordings will enhance the audience experience.

The recital features accomplished Odissi dancers Rudraprasad Swain and Ananya Parida. Both trained at the prestigious Orissa Dance Academy under Padma Shri Guru Gangadhar Pradhan and Padma Shri Guru Aruna Mohanty. They have established themselves as notable performers and young choreographers. Based in Bhubaneswar, they run the Sanchari School of Dance & Music.

A repertoire of their extensive performances includes appearances at festivals such as the Nishagandhi Dance Festival, Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, Navaneetham Festival, Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre, NCPA Mumbai, Yoga Parva by Sangeet Natak Akademi, Neemrana Fort Palace, and the Uday Shankar Dance Festival. Their work has received critical acclaim both in India and internationally.

Rudraprasad's recent solo production, mentored by Guru Rama Vaidyanathan and presented as part of Pratiroop by Warrier Foundation, highlights his innovative approach to Odissi. Ananya, an empanelled artist of Spic Macay, with Rudraprasad, are senior scholarship recipients from the Ministry of Culture (Government of India) and graded artistes of Doordarshan.

Free entry on a first come first served basis on RSVP and availability. For registration, visit bangaloreinternationalcentre.org.

INBRIEF

Man arrested in Kerala on charge of alleged Maoist links

The Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) of the Kerala Police arrested Soman, 49, of Kalpetta from the Shoranur railway station on Sunday for alleged involvement in Maoist activities and brought him to Ernakulam for interrogation. Soman, who was reportedly a '*dalam* commander' in Wayanad, was one of the few leaders who were wanted for alleged Maoist activities. He had several cases pending against him, and is said to have been involved in a shootout with the police.

Thiruvananthapuram woman shot at by masked assailant

A woman was shot allegedly with an air gun by a masked assailant in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday morning. The victim, identified as Shini, 41, was swiftly taken to a private hospital in the city following the incident. The attack occurred at Shini's residence in Chempakassery. An unidentified woman, posing as a delivery person, approached Shini and shot her in the right arm. Shini works at the National Health Mission. The motive behind the attack remains unclear.

YSRCP leader released after arrest at Bengaluru airport

YSR Congress Party leader Chevireddy Mohith Reddy was released on Sunday after his arrest the previous night over a case of attack on his rival candidate from the Telugu Desam Party, Pulivarthi Venkata Mani Prasad (Nani), after the election in the Chandragiri Assembly constituency in Andhra Pradesh.

Immigration authorities detained him when he was about to fly to Dubai from the Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru.

Water released from Mettur Dam as inflow increases

Inflow rises to 1.51 lakh cusecs; water is expected to reach full reservoir level in one or two days

The Hindu Bureau
SALEM

Copious flow: Minister K.N. Nehru opening the shutters of the Mettur Dam in Salem on Sunday. PTI

Minister for Municipal Administration K.N. Nehru opened the shutters of the Mettur Dam here on Sunday. This follows a direction from Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to release water from the dam in view of the increase in inflow and storage.

Inflow to the dam increased to 1.51 lakh cusecs, and the water in the dam is expected to reach the full reservoir level of 120 feet in one or two days. The inflow had increased to 1.34 lakh cusecs at 8 a.m. on Sunday from 1.23 lakh cusecs as of Saturday. By noon, it rose to 1.47 lakh cusecs and at 4 p.m., it stood at 1.51 lakh cusecs. The dam's water level stood at 110.76 feet, and the storage, 79.49 TMC, as against the full capacity of 93.47 TMC. In the last 24 hours till Sunday 4 p.m., the dam's water and storage levels rose by nine feet and 12 TMC respectively.

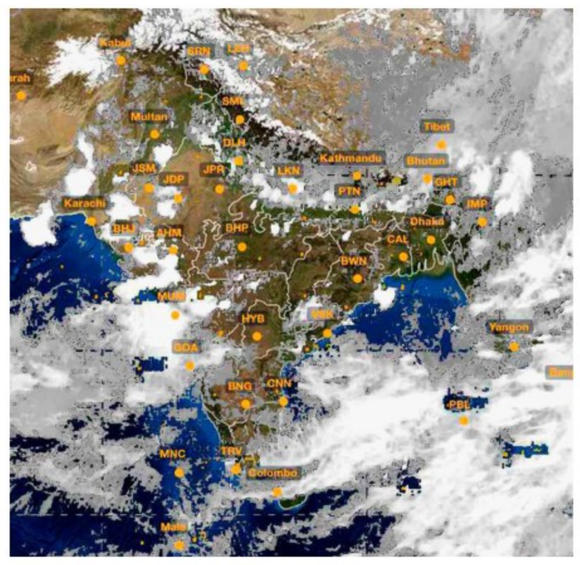
Mr. Nehru opened the shutters of the dam at 3 p.m. Initially, 5,000 cusecs of water was discharged into the Cauvery River, and it would be stepped up.

Mr. Stalin had taken various steps to get Tamil Nadu's share of water from Karnataka. The Cauvery Water Management Authority, too, directed Karnataka to release 45 TMC of water to Tamil Nadu, but Karnataka did not do so. However, thanks to the nature, inflow into Mettur has crossed 1.50 lakh cusecs now and the water level has touched 110 feet, the Minister told mediapersons later. "The water discharged now from the dam is not for samba crop. It is to fill the lakes in the delta region," he added.

Salem Collector R. Brindha Devi; MP T.M. Selvaganapathi; and MLAs R. Rajendran and S. Sathasivam were present when the water was released.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Rajasthan and Gujarat. Heavy rainfall at isolated places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Odisha.Thunderstorm with lightning and gusty winds very likely at isolated places over Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	36.6	27.8	Kozhikode	5.9	32.4	23.4
Ahmedabad	—	31.7	26.7	Kurnool	—	33.0	26.3
Aizawl	12.0	31.8	23.6	Lucknow	—	34.7	30.0
Allahabad	—	36.8	28.7	Madurai	—	38.6	26.7
Bengaluru	—	26.0	21.2	Mangaluru	2.0	29.6	26.0
Bhopal	19.0	28.2	24.2	Mumbai	4.0	29.8	26.2
Bhubaneswar	—	33.5	25.0	Mysuru	—	28.0	—
Chandigarh	—	39.6	30.2	New Delhi	—	37.2	27.8
Chennai	—	36.0	29.3	Patna	1.8	35.6	29.0
Coimbatore	—	33.0	23.9	Port Blair	2.0	29.5	27.1
Dehradun	20.0	35.0	25.7	Puducherry	—	37.3	27.6
Gangtok	46.0	24.4	19.3	Pune	12.5	28.2	24.4
Goa	16.0	30.3	26.6	Raipur	3.4	27.4	24.3
Guwahati	—	37.0	28.5	Ranchi	8.0	29.2	23.8
Hubballi	—	26.0	23.0	Shillong	—	28.2	19.0
Hyderabad	2.6	27.1	23.2	Shimla	11.0	26.6	17.5
Imphal	—	31.3	24.1	Srinagar	—	36.2	24.6
Jaipur	0.4	35.0	27.7	Thiruvananthapuram	3.0	31.2	25.6
Kochi	13.0	30.4	25.6	Tiruchi	—	36.1	27.6
Kohima	—	30.6	19.4	Vijayawada	7.0	35.6	26.0
Kolkata	10.0	32.4	27.2	Visakhapatnam	0.2	30.7	26.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.39	..30	50	... 100	...121	
Bengaluru	.10	..17	10	 17	...101	
Chennai	...3	8	61	... 148	...132	
Delhi	.18	173	38	... 105	80	
Hyderabad	.13	..11	31	 36	69	
Kolkata	...8	..55	18	 23	35	
Lucknow	...9	..12	25	 42	79	
Mumbai	.76	6	..2	 17	...310	
Pune	...3	..17	21	 19	62	
Visakhapatnam	.11	..57	33	 62	...124	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 210 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 12

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Vijayashankar, two-time MP for Mysuru, appointed Meghalaya Governor

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

C.H. Vijayashankar

Two-time Mysuru MP and former Minister C.H. Vijayashankar has been appointed as the Governor of Meghalaya. He is one of the six Governors appointed by President Droupadi Murmu, who also reshuffled three others late on Saturday.

Mr. Vijayashankar's political career spans over three decades. He was with the BJP for the greater part of his political life and with the Congress for two years from 2017 to 2019 before returning to the BJP fold.

He was elected as Mysuru MP on the BJP ticket in 1998 and again in 2004 when he defeated Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wadiyar of the erstwhile royal family.

In 2014, he was fielded against former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda from Hassan and lost the polls. In the 2019 parliamentary elections, he was fielded as the Congress candidate from Mysuru against Pratap Simha. He lost again, after which he returned to the BJP.

Apart from his tenure at the national level, Mr. Vijayashankar also spent considerable time in the State politics and was elected as an MLA from Hunsur in 1994. He was also an MLC from 2010 to 2016. He was also the Minister for Forests, Ecology and Environment.

In the 2023 Assembly elections, he was fielded as the BJP candidate from Periyapatna constituency in Mysuru district but suffered a defeat.

A Rashtrapati Bhavan communique states that his appointment will take effect from the date he assumes charge.

Karnataka suspends search for missing truck driver; Kerala Minister calls it 'breach of trust'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Put on hold: Rescue teams return to the banks of the Gangavali river in Uttara Kannada district, after the search operation was suspended on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Kerala government has expressed dismay at the decision of the Uttara Kannada district administration to suspend the search operation to locate lorry driver Arjun, suspected to have been washed away into the Gangavali river, following a massive landslip at Shirur in Karnataka on July 16.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan shot off a letter to his Karnataka counterpart Siddaramaiah on Sunday urging him to issue directions to continue the search.

Turbulent river

On Sunday, the 13th day of the search mission, Karwar MLA Satish Krishna Sail and Uttara Kannada Deputy Commissioner Lakshmi Priya announced that the search would have to be called off temporarily as divers were unable to see through the turbulent waters of the river where Arjun's truck is believed to be stuck in the soil moved by the landslip. The strong current in the river had made the operation risky for the divers, they said.

Kerala Minister for Public Works P.A. Mohamed Riyas, who visited the landslip site, expressed disappointment at the move to suspend the mission. He said the Uttara Kannada district administration had called off the mission arbitrarily.

Terming it a breach of trust, he said, "They are going back on the decision to bring pontoons and tug boats to assist the search. We have conveyed our objection to the decision."

Pinarayi's appeal

Appreciating the efforts put in by the search teams, Mr. Vijayan, in his letter, requested Mr. Siddaramaiah to continue the mission with the required equipment.

Officials of the Uttara Kannada district administration, however, said the mission would have to wait till a barge is transported by road from Trichy in Tamil Nadu to dredge the area where the lorry had been detected.

Landslip: Trains cancelled until further notice

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

South Western Railway (SWR) that had cancelled all the train services on the Bengaluru-Mangaluru sector till Monday, has further extended the cancellation of services till further notice as massive earth embankment work is involved in restoration of the track affected by landslips in the Sakleshpur-Subrahmanya Road ghat section.

A section of the track between Yadakumari and Kadagaravalli stations on the Western Ghats between Hassan and Mangaluru was affected following landslips triggered by torrential rains towards the valley-side. As the stretch is approachable only through rail connectivity, personnel deployed by the Mysuru division are moving machinery, equipment and material required for strengthening the embankment through wagons.

The cancelled trains include: train no. 16511/16512 KSR Bengaluru - Kannur - KSR Bengaluru Express; train no. 16595/16596 KSR Bengaluru - Karwar - KSR Bengaluru Panchaganga Express; train no. 16585/16586 SMVT Bengaluru - Murdeshwar - SMVT Bengaluru Express; train no. 07377/07378 Vijayapura - Mangaluru Central - Vijayapura Express Special, and the tri-weekly day train Yeshwantpur-Mangaluru Junction/Karwar - Yeshwantpur, train nos. 16575/16576 and 16515/16516 and the weekly day train, train no. 16539/16540.

430 personnel at site

To address this emergency, a total of 430 personnel are at the site, 200 on the day shift, 120 on the night shift, and 110 on standby. Immediate measures are taken to ensure their safety and comfort, including the erection of inflatable tents, provision of raincoats, safety shoes, portable toilets, and essential supplies.

Food, water supply

An official release said four cooks are on-site, preparing meals with the support of adequate raw materials, groceries, and cooking equipment. Additional food packets and water bottles are regularly supplied from Subrahmanya Road Station. A dedicated medical team, including doctors, nurses, and dressers, is present at the site with a full range of medical supplies.

Kerala High Court directs Centre to grant citizenship to 2 Pakistan-born women

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The court says renunciation certificate cannot be treated as a major requirement

The Kerala High Court has directed the Union government to grant citizenship to two young women born in Pakistan, taking into account the no-objection certificate issued by the Pakistan High Commission and without insisting on a certificate of renunciation of Pakistan citizenship.

Justice T.R. Ravi passed the verdict while allowing a writ petition by Rasheeda Bano from Thalassery and her two daughters. The petition said Ms. Bano's husband, Mohammed Maroof, now employed in the UAE, had migrated from Kerala to Pakistan in 1977 along with his grandmother.

In 2008, the family moved to India upon getting permission from the Indian government.

The Centre decided to grant them registration as citizens subject to submission of documents. One of the documents was the renunciation certificate issued by the Pakistan government. As her daughters were minors, Ms. Bano could not apply for the certificates.

The court observed that the requirement for the renunciation certificate can only be treated as a rule of evidence and not as a substantive requirement.

Central body urges southern States to intensify energy efficiency efforts

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The officials highlighted the economic and environmental benefits that could be gained through energy efficiency. V. RAJU

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has urged the designated agencies of all southern States to intensify their focus on energy efficiency and 'Mission LiFE' in order to realise the immense potential for attracting global investments in key sectors such as industry, urban development, agriculture and building.

BEE senior officers, including Deputy Director General Ashok Kumar and Secretary Milind Deora, made the appeal during a detailed discussion on the status and impact of BEE's energy efficiency programmes held on Sunday. They stated that the energy efficiency programmes would play a crucial role in the development of Amaravati as the new capital city of Andhra Pradesh which was poised to be the State's growth engine.

The officers emphasised the significant economic and environmental benefits that could be gained through energy efficiency across India.

Mr. Deora expressed gratitude to the Andhra Pradesh government's support under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for accelerating energy efficiency initiatives, and said A.P. was one of the best States with huge potential to attract sizeable investments in energy efficiency.

Teacher suspended for trimming hair of students

The Hindu Bureau
KHAMMAM

A teacher at Zilla Parishad High School in Peruvancha village in Telangana's Khammam district was suspended on Saturday for trimming the hair of nearly 15 students as part of enforcement of 'discipline'.

She reportedly justified her act saying that the students failed to trim their 'long hair' despite repeated reminders. Infuriated parents staged a protest demanding action against the 'outrageous act'.

Planning better

The NITI Aayog suffers from both structural and functional issues

With 10 State and Union Territory representatives skipping the ninth Governing Council meeting of the NITI Aayog chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi – seven of them boycotted it – the think tank's role has been called into question. The Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand did so because of concerns with the perceived lack of allocations and projects to their States in the Union Budget. But the boycott and, later, the walkout by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, suggest that the role of the think tank, limiting itself to an advisory body to the Union Government, has led to disenchantment among States, even if the protests were limited to leaders belonging to the political opposition. Constituted by the NDA government in its first term, the NITI Aayog was to replace the Planning Commission, doing away with the "top-down" approach of the earlier body, and to focus on "cooperative federalism". But by limiting itself to an advisory body without any powers of resource distribution or allocation to States and other bodies and focusing on creating indices to evaluate States, it has led to the unintended consequence of "competitive federalism"; while the Finance Ministry has unfettered powers to decide on grants to States. In contrast, the Planning Commission, which too had its detractors, at least allowed for consultations with States in such matters.

It has not helped matters that the Bharatiya Janata Party has sought to seek votes in State elections on the basis of providing "double engine" governments, leading to complaints by Opposition-ruled States that the Centre has favoured those ruled by the BJP for investment projects. The fact that the NDA government now is crucially dependent upon the support of parties that rule Bihar and Andhra Pradesh – States that suffer varying developmental deficits – and the express intention of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to address their demands specifically in the Budget have not been lost on the government's detractors. Irrespective of the merit in this contention, the fact is that consultations with States on grants and projects have become limited after the end of the Planning Commission. While the 16th Finance Commission is tasked with the removal of a horizontal imbalance among States and the Finance Ministry's focus is on macro-economic stability and the financial system, the need to address growth through infrastructure and capital investments in States is something that requires institutional backing at the Centre as well. The NITI Aayog must be re-envisioned to bring back some of the responsibilities that the Planning Commission had for States for a truer "cooperative federalism".

Plastic mess

More efforts must be made to curb production and promote alternatives

India, like other large economies, faces a significant plastic waste problem. According to a 2020-21 report by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), four million tonnes of plastic waste are generated annually. Unfortunately, only a quarter of this waste is recycled or treated, with the rest ending up in landfills or being disposed of unsustainably. Since 2016, the Plastic Waste Management Rules have mandated that users of plastics are responsible for collecting and recycling their waste. These requirements, or the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) rules, were initially voluntary but are now enforced through an online EPR trading platform. The EPR system involves packagers, importers, and large industrial users of plastic packaging, as well as professional recyclers, registering with the CPCB. Recyclers, who have networks to collect plastic waste, recycle the waste and receive validated certificates for each tonne recycled. These certificates can be uploaded to a dedicated CPCB portal and purchased by plastic packaging companies that fall short of their annual recycling targets. In 2022-23, the CPCB estimated that certificates for nearly 3.7 million tonnes of recycled plastic were generated. However, it was discovered that not all of these certificates were legitimate – there were approximately 6,00,000 fraudulent certificates. Additionally, hackers reportedly stole several thousand certificates last year and sold them to companies. A criminal investigation is ongoing, and it remains unclear how much of the claimed 3.7 million tonnes was genuinely recycled.

In response, the CPCB has taken two significant actions. First, it commissioned an audit of nearly 800 firms, representing almost a fourth of the 2,300 registered recyclers who had traded certificates. Second, it undertook a comprehensive overhaul of the security features on the EPR trading platform, although this has delayed the process of filing returns for 2023-24 by several months. The CPCB has described these problems as "teething issues" associated with implementing a large-scale electronic system. While the audit is necessary, it should be a one-time initiative to avoid undermining trust in the system with annual, lengthy investigations. Although the CPCB has the authority to impose heavy fines, the process is lengthy and fraught with legal challenges. A market-driven approach to solving plastic waste has a significant but limited effect. Greater efforts must be made to curb plastic production and promote sustainable alternatives. Addressing the root causes of plastic waste and enhancing the effectiveness of recycling systems are crucial in mitigating India's plastic waste problem.

Recasting care models for mental illness, homelessness

Vandana Gopikumar

with The Banyan, The Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health and Aaladamara and has worked with homeless persons living with a mental illness (HPMI) for three decades

Supriya Sahu

Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, Health and Family Welfare

Socio-normative representations of homeless persons living with a mental illness (HPMI) have ubiquitously ascribed them to the role of refuge seekers. This has resulted in rescue missions that are singularly focused on transferring them, volitionally or coercively, to mental hospitals, shelter homes, beggars' homes and even prisons. The primary assumption that HPMIs must be displaced from the streets because of the many risks that it poses, while valid, is also contestable.

As a mental health professional and bureaucrat, respectively, our perspective was similarly limiting over two decades ago, when we prioritised shelter and treatment over agency, choice and place-making. Social order, while it is of relevance and valuable in many contexts, can sometimes constrain the imagination and restrict responses that fall within the safer, more dominant narratives, albeit well-intentioned. That there is a social world not necessarily aligned to the mores of the day and that culture, freedoms and notions of safety can be experienced in non-typical ways take some getting used to.

Challenging notions, efforts at integration

Engagement with lived experience experts can often support this journey and challenge notions of what care and responsiveness constitute. Often, homeless persons form affiliations with local support circles that include fellow homeless persons, local eateries and pets, that offer them a self-curated sense of belongingness. Equally, and perhaps more significantly among the multitude of truths, is the narrative of oppression, scarcity, abuse, exposure to inclement weather conditions, and an exacerbation of symptoms associated with psychoses. Consequently, we would be loath to locate the problem in sacred and rigid binaries. It requires more than the paltry effort that is accorded now, to complicate the narrative and texture the phenomenon with the complexity that it deserves.

Noteworthy among a few efforts in India that have supported several HPMI reenter communities is the collaboration between the National Health Mission, the Tamil Nadu Department of Health, the Institute of Mental Health, The Banyan, the Azim Premji Foundation and local civil society organisations. This has resulted in access to emergency care and recovery centres (ECRCs) within district hospitals. This integration serves two purposes.

First it ruptures the hegemonic domination of large asylum-styled treatment spaces that perpetuate the stereotypical identity of a diseased mind. More importantly, it services an increased number of people with greater immediacy, ensuring last-mile proximal care and crises responses across scattered geographies. Overcrowding, limited human service professionals, the use of restraint, and poor personal attention have impacted care ecologies globally, just as they have in India.

A transformation that allows for design and social architecture adaptations in this context locates care in smaller units, are reasonably staffed, and mandate personal attention and better medical care to address comorbidities commonly found among those exposed to enduring adversities.

> An outline of a care paradigm and shift in mindset that advance the rights of homeless persons with mental illness

While recent policy shifts represent progress, they also demand deeper engagement and longer term commitment. We must also critically examine when and why rights are stripped away, examine the attitude and practice of society and care professionals and develop leadership and governance systems that are adaptive, dynamic, reflective and address intricate dilemmas and contested issues.

In this context, especially among those who opt to sleep rough despite there being an availability of care options, the symbolism of appearance – matted hair or shaven heads – deserves careful consideration. As Obeyesekere notes, a shaven head can signify renunciation, when seen in contexts, from Vrindavan's widows to residents of mental hospitals, and must not be immediately conflated with mental illness. Our approach, therefore, must be to be in continuous engagement, drawing frameworks for admission that respect individual agency. While the gains of intervention can be significant and the hardships of street life are real, coercive care often yields poor outcomes.

Problems with institutional spaces

Meanwhile, about 37% of people living in State psychiatric facilities and other care homes experience long-term needs, with a median duration of stay of six years. Most of them have histories of homelessness and have been typically brought into the system as a result of police and judicial intervention. In 2017 the Supreme Court of India, in response to a public interest litigation, mandated that State governments undertake rehabilitative measures. In this context, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, had filed guidelines for rehabilitation homes. Unfortunately, the imagination of community re-entry pathways for those living long term in psychiatric facilities remains cloistered: in semi-institutional or trans-institutional options that transfer their custodial existence from one place to another. Further, these considerations are limited in their conceptualisation of who is "cured" and therefore "ready for discharge", imposing deterministic expectations of eligibility to live in the community. Besides perpetuating continued distancing from social resources and participation on equal terms, these institutional spaces risk defaulting to similar experiences of a lowered quality of life and violations of rights violations.

Globally and in India, large-scale housing initiatives such as Housing First and Tarasha offer comprehensive social and clinical care and demonstrate the feasibility of such groundbreaking options for those with a range of disabilities and clinical needs. Similarly, over 700 people have accessed housing support and social care through the 'Home Again' collaborative across nine States in India, piloted first in 2018 as a research trial with support from Grand Challenges, Canada, and scaled up in partnership with the Rural India Supporting Trust. This has also been adopted by the Government of Tamil Nadu and other stakeholders nationally. For those transitioning from hospitals, with mild to moderate disabilities, hostel-like co-living facilities that symbolise enhanced social capital and security, rather than rehabilitation homes, may be considered.

Reframe support measures

Social protection and support measures for homeless people with mental illness require a radical shift and a reframing from paternalistic interventions to liberatory-focused strategies. A monthly priority disability allowance or out of work allowance of ₹1,500, while modest, could serve as a critical lifeline for those pushed to the margins of social hierarchy. By addressing the bureaucratic hurdles of securing Aadhar and facilitating banking access for HPMI, we pave the way for financial inclusion and economic empowerment.

These documentation and financial scaffolds, however, must be complemented by more imaginative and holistic approaches. In parallel, structural issues such as discrimination and violence, segregation and deprivation, need to be emphatically addressed. Towards this end, social care and post-discharge support must be strengthened and integrated within the District Mental Health Programme. As a result of initiatives led by state and non-state actors, service engagement among 800 mental health service users who exited the ECRCs over a three-year period is at 75% post discharge, which is higher than the global experience.

Advancing economic justice demands confronting systemic barriers, elevating insights from marginalised groups, and creating transformative models that accelerate inclusion. Workforce participation, when thoughtfully facilitated, becomes a powerful tool for reappropriating economic space. Traditional employment models and vocational training initiatives are often not only disconnected from contemporary economic realities but they fail to account for individual agency, strengths and aspirations. Instead, they default to narrow notions of productivity and consistency. In this background, social cooperatives, where groups of individuals drive the exchange of their labour, offer a promising avenue for meaningful engagement, which fosters a sense of community and purpose. Our efforts must extend to cultivating social capital and implementing affirmative action policies that spur substantive socio-economic, cultural and political inclusion of HPMI. Tamil Nadu will be the first State that will soon release a policy that will integrate many of these pragmatic and studied approaches.

It is our hope that this multifaceted approach will challenge the reductionist view of HPMI as mere recipients of charity to be extricated from their circumstances. Instead, it advocates for a framework that honours their agency, respects their choices, and supports their right to claim a place in society on their own terms.

With contributions from Lakshmi Narasimhan, Director, The Banyan

The right way to counter a poor Covaxin safety study

R. Prasad

It took all of five days for the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to strongly criticise the poor design of the long-term safety study of Covaxin by researchers from the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. The study was published in the journal, *Drug Safety*. Bharat Biotech too pointed out the major limitations in the Covaxin study on May 16, 2024, three days after the paper was published.

Many gaps

The BHU study, which is based on one year follow-up, is of course riddled with major limitations. The study lacked a control arm and data on the background rates of observed adverse events, making it almost impossible to ascertain whether the adverse events observed were indeed caused by or associated with Covaxin. The study was carried out over the telephone and relied solely on participants' recall of adverse events 12 months after vaccination, thereby introducing recall bias.

Including a control arm is extremely important while studying vaccine safety. Only such a study can provide meaningful and reliable information about the adverse effects of a vaccine. Studying the safety of a vaccine in thousands of participants for periods lasting one to three years is vital. Clinical evaluation of every adverse event is also paramount to rule out causality. Finally, randomly assigning the participants either to an intervention arm or a control group is important to eliminate bias. A phase-3 randomised, controlled trial involving a large number of participants is thus ideal for studying vaccine safety.

Bharat Biotech and the ICMR had carried out such a phase-3 clinical trial that was randomised, placebo-controlled and double-blind, involving nearly 25,800 participants. The trial began in November 2020 and the interim results were first posted as a preprint on July 2, 2021. The interim results were based on data as of May 17, 2021 when 130 cases were reported in the trial. The safety data that was captured was only up to 56 days following vaccination.

> The deafening silence around Covaxin's phase-3 trial final safety results must end

A publication failure that is glaring

Three years after the interim data were posted as a preprint, Bharat Biotech and ICMR are yet to publish any long-term safety data of the Covaxin phase-3 trial. Given Bharat Biotech's excellent track record of publishing clinical trial results, including the animal and phase-1, phase-2 and interim phase-3 trial data of Covaxin, the failure to publish the long-term, final safety results of the phase-3 trial of Covaxin is perplexing. The failure to publish the trial safety data becomes all the more glaring as according to the information posted by the company in the clinical trial registry website, the duration of the phase-3 trial was only for one year. This would mean that both the ICMR and Bharat Biotech have been in possession of the phase-3 safety data but have failed to publish them even two and a half years after the trial came to an end. The lapse becomes all the more striking as Bharat Biotech had published six papers on Covaxin after the phase-3 interim results were published.

This failure is just one of many blinding shortcomings. On January 3, 2021, the drug regulator had granted emergency-use authorisation for Covaxin under "clinical trial mode", and the recipients were to be followed up for safety. In the second week of March 2021, the drug regulator removed the "clinical trial mode" tag. This was based on the first interim analysis of the vaccine when 43 COVID-19 cases were reported in the trial participants. According to Dr. V.K. Paul, Head of India's Vaccine Administration committee, more than 19 lakh people were administered Covaxin and 311 cases of "side-effects" were reported as on the day the drug regulator removed the "clinical trial mode" condition. Despite being in possession of these instances of adverse effects, no details of the vaccine safety have been published.

On the Covishield study

Finally, it is surprising that the ICMR did not criticise the BHU authors for a similar study carried out on people who were administered Covishield, and published in May 2023. In addition to the long-term Covishield safety study having similar limitations as the Covaxin study, the study found that people who received the vaccine after developing COVID-19 were two times at risk of persistent adverse events when compared to those who received the vaccine before COVID-19. Based on this, the authors went overboard to caution against mass vaccination of people with Covishield and instead advocated an individualised vaccination strategy as a "better alternative for public health safety". So did the ICMR react the way it did for the Covaxin study only because it was a co-developer of the vaccine and was involved in the clinical trials, and not because of the critical limitations of the study per se? While demanding that the journal retract the paper for its safety conclusions not based on evidence, the ICMR has failed to disclose its conflicts of interest, thus setting a bad example. Finally, the ICMR and Bharat Biotech owe it to the trial participants and the people who received the vaccine, and should publish the long-pending phase-3 vaccine safety data soon. That is the only right way to counter BHU's badly designed study findings. It should stop behaving like a bully by resorting to academic censorship (the ICMR had demanded that the journal Editor retract the paper).

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shed bias

While the Prime Minster's clarion call to all States to pool in their efforts for the overall growth of the country and the economy was in the right direction, what has always stuck out like a sore thumb is the clear discrimination shown by the government against the States that are not ruled by the BJP. Be it budgetary allocations or grants for calamities, the Centre's attitude has been partisan. That as many as 10 States and Union Territories chose to skip the meeting (Page 1, "At NITI meet, PM calls for combined efforts of all states", July 28) is evidence of this. If the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' is to be achieved, the government must shed its bias.

C.V. Aravind,
Bengaluru

Corrections & Clarifications

A sentence in the fifth paragraph of a report, "PM defends Agnipath scheme on anniversary of Kargil War" (July 27, 2024) read, "...we have a list of 5,000 weapons that are no longer being exported from outside..." It should have been imported.

The first medal

Manu Bhaker has erased the disappointment she faced at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Now with India's first medal, she can be proud.

A.P. Thiruvadi,
Chennai

Defending disability reservations

The recent controversy involving Puja Khedkar, who allegedly faked her disability and caste to obtain benefits, has ignited a debate on the reservations granted to persons with disabilities (PwDs). The issue gained further traction when a former chief executive officer of NITI Aayog tweeted that reservations for PwDs need to be reviewed. Although he later clarified that he was referring only to mental disabilities (thereby drawing an unnecessary and baseless wedge between physical and mental disabilities), his statement, along with similar comments from other civil servants, raises troubling questions about societal attitudes towards disabilities and reservation policies.

Rahul Bajaj

practicing lawyer; Co-Founder, Mission Accessibility; Senior Associate Fellow, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy; and adjunct faculty, BML Munjal University School of Law

Ayushmita Samal

Research Fellow with the Center for Inclusive Policy

Puja Khedkar's alleged fraudulent activities should be met with stringent punishment. This is the solution, not the review of the reservation system that provides crucial support to a marginalised group

Deep-rooted ableism

First, how many disabled individuals have these officers interacted with, or had the opportunity to know? Have they ever been introduced to the challenges faced by PwDs, during a session or a workshop? The deep-rooted ableism that their statements reflect are the lived realities of many PwDs.

PwDs face multiple barriers to their effective participation in society and the workforce. These include infrastructural challenges, the education system, and exam curricula and formats that are designed to be used by, and suit, able-bodied individuals. Reservation policies aim to level the playing field by providing equitable opportunities to PwDs. That a few individuals are exploiting these benefits should not overshadow the broader purpose and impact of such policies. Sweeping generalisations based on isolated incidents are unfair and counterproductive. Certain officers have asked whether PwDs who hold positions within the civil services have the "physical fitness" to fulfil their duties. Such statements reflect the unconscious bias that many people hold against PwDs.

PwDs continue to face challenges in both the education and employment sectors, yet those are hardly highlighted. The 76th round of the National Sample Survey in 2018 found that only 23.8% of PwDs were employed, whereas the Labour Force Participation Rate at the national level was 50.2% the same year. This can be attributed to lack of access to accessible education; stigma and biases at the hiring stage; and lack of reasonable accommodation at the workplace for PwDs.

These structural issues, however, are hardly ever pointed out by the same individuals who question the validity of affirmative action provided to PwDs. For instance, take the case of Kartik Kansal, who is affected by muscular distrophy. He has not been allotted a service despite clearing the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)'s civil service exam four times. Similarly, due to her disability, Ira Singhal had to approach the Central Administrative Tribunal to secure her rightful posting despite having secured the first rank in the civil service exams. These are the moments when the conscience of our intellectuals should be stirred.

Potential misuse

In a related context, the Supreme Court addressed the potential misuse of scribes in *Vikash Kumar v. UPSC* (2021). The argument was that PwDs, if allowed to choose their scribes and if their disability percentage is less than 40%, might misuse this provision. The Court countered this saying: "If some incidents come to light of able-bodied candidates hiding chits in their dress code and misusing them to cheat in an exam, the normal consequence is suitable punitive action against such students. It is not to switch to a different dress code that is so uncomfortable that many competent students find it hard to sit in it for the entire duration of the exam and perform to the best of their ability." This principle should similarly apply to reservations for PwDs.

Certification system

India's certification system for disabilities also has significant flaws. The practice of quantifying disabilities by percentage is outdated and not supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Functional limitations, rather than medical percentages, should be the basis for assessment. Also, the UPSC insists on a separate and independent disability assessment, thereby cocking a snook at the disability certification process recognised by the government that results in the issuance of a disability certificate and Unique Disability ID (UDID). This gives rise to the possibility of the two sets of assessments yielding contradictory results

An additional challenge is the lack of specialists to evaluate various disabilities, which makes the certification process inaccessible and time consuming. The complicated assessment guidelines prescribed by the state are often unrealistic at the level of district hospitals, which are constrained in terms of both infrastructure and resources. This leaves the assessment of the disability and its extent open to interpretation. Psychosocial disabilities, whose assessment is relatively more subjective, are assessed based on the outdated IDEAS (Indian Disability Evaluation and Assessment Scale) scale. In many cases, such tests are not even conducted. Persons with invisible, hidden, or less apparent disabilities, such as blood disorders, often face rejection because they "do not look disabled".

The focus should be on addressing these systemic issues. Ms. Khedkar's alleged fraudulent activities should be met with stringent punishment. This is the solution, not the unwarranted review of the reservation system that provides crucial support to a marginalised group.

Udhayanidhi Stalin's great challenge

If he does not rise to the occasion, it could affect the Dravidian movement

STATE OF PLAY

B. Kolappan
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M.K. Stalin, who had waited for decades to become president of the DMK and Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, seems to have fast-tracked the rise of his son, Udhayanidhi Stalin. The younger Stalin, a debutant Minister for Youth Welfare and Sports Development, and secretary of the DMK's youth wing, has climbed the political ladder quickly. There is now intense speculation that he could be elevated as Deputy Chief Minister.

While Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin has sought to play down the rumours saying he "values the post of the secretary of the youth wing above all positions", senior leaders and ministers believe there is "no smoke without fire." They have reasons to say this. When there were whispers earlier that Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin and his brother-in-law Sabareesan would join politics, Mr. Stalin had said no one from his family would enter politics, but it did not take long for him to contradict his statements.

Back then, it was a different time in Tamil Nadu. Mr. Stalin, who had inherited the party from his father, DMK patriarch M. Karunanidhi, was wary of public opinion against the elevation of his son. Mr. Stalin had taken over as DMK working president when Karunanidhi was inactive in politics due to old age, but still had a significant presence in the party. The AIADMK, the main opposition party, which was in power after the death of its leader Jayalalithaa, could claim the moral high ground saying it was free from the pressures of family politics.

The 2021 Assembly polls were crucial for the DMK, which had been out of power for 10 years, and Mr. Stalin was worried that his son's rise could work against the party. But the death of Jayalalithaa and Karunanidhi would have emboldened him to appoint his son – first as secretary of the youth wing and later as the DMK candidate for the Thiruvallikeni-Chepauk Assembly constituency.

It is not as if Mr. Udhayanidhi was given everything on a platter. He proved himself as a campaigner during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In the 2021 Assembly polls, by holding a single piece of brick, he conveyed the message that the BJP-led Central government had not done anything beyond announcing that it would set up an All Indian Institute of Medical Science in Madurai. He had already gained attention in Tamil Nadu as an actor even though none of his films, barring *Maamannan*, a political drama that was released after the 2021 Assembly polls, carried a strong social message.

The DMK won the Assembly elections comfortably in 2021. However, despite the fact that Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin had gained acceptance among the party leaders and cadres alike, Mr. Stalin did not include his son in his Cabinet. Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin had to wait for more than a year to find a place in the cabinet and rank ninth in seniority in the ministry.

Clad in jeans and tee shirts with a logo of the party's youth wing, Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin has refused to be bogged down by embarrassing questions, such as those relating to dynasty politics. He has shown that he is capable of handling major political issues, such as the uproar that followed his comments on Sanatana Dharma. At the same time, he has not made any significant change that is expected of a successor. Whenever he was expected to be proactive in dealing with certain issues, he has left them to be tackled by his father. For instance, the recent hooch tragedy in Kallakurichi, which claimed the lives of 67 people, provided a great opportunity for him to rise to the occasion. But the DMK government handled it the way the previous governments in the State did. The killing of Bahujan Samaj Party leader Armstrong and the gunning down of one of his assassins after their arrest speak poorly of the planning and performance of the government.

The Dravidian movement captured the imagination of the people by highlighting genuine issues that failed to be addressed by the Congress, which led the freedom movement in the country. The DMK and its offshoot, the AIADMK, dominated the political scene by meeting regional aspirations. But half a decade of Dravidian rule has not brought any qualitative change in Tamil Nadu politics. If Mr. Udhayanidhi Stalin fails to usher in the changes expected of young politicians of modern times, it will prove to be difficult for the Dravidian movement as a whole.

The Dalit factor in the 2024 Lok Sabha election

The Congress improved its vote share in Scheduled Caste-reserved seats to 20.8% in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from 16.7% in 2019

DATA POINT

Sanjay Kumar
Jyoti Mishra
Vibha Attri

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lost the election in the Faizabad Lok Sabha constituency, which is home to the Ram Mandir. There was a lot of speculation that the party would make gains in this seat because this was the first election after the construction of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. However, the verdict came as a surprise. Not only did the BJP lose, but the Dalit candidate from the Samajwadi Party (SP), Awadhesh Prasad, defeated the Thakur candidate from the BJP, Lallu Singh, in this non-reserved seat. In Indian electoral history, this was one of the few instances of a Dalit candidate winning from an unreserved Lok Sabha seat. This draws attention to how Dalits voted in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Gains for Congress

A look at the performance of political parties in parliamentary constituencies reserved for the Scheduled Castes (SCs) – 84 in total – shows that the Congress won 20 such seats and the Congress and its allies won 33. The Congress won only six SC-reserved seats in 2019, so its performance in 2024 in SC-reserved seats was a considerable improvement for the party. The Congress performed better not only in terms of seats but also in terms of vote share: it secured 20.8% of the vote share in the 2024 elections compared to 16.7% in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

On the other hand, the BJP suffered a setback in SC-reserved seats. It won only 29 seats in 2024 compared to 46 in 2019. Overall, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) managed to win 39 SC-reserved seats in 2024, which is 15 seats fewer than in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections **(Table 1)**.

Samajwadi Party MP Awadhesh Prasad speaks in the Lok Sabha in New Delhi. ANI

The electoral fate of parties

In many States, the choices of Dalit voters may have changed the electoral fate of political parties. More specifically, they may have been instrumental to an extent in shaping the electoral outcome of the NDA and INDIA blocs in many States. While Dalits did not vote in a similar manner in all States, data suggest that wherever Dalit voters supported the NDA or the INDIA bloc, that alliance got more seats. For instance, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have a similar nature of political contest. The INDIA bloc performed well in Uttar Pradesh, but not to the same extent in Bihar. The findings of the National Election Study (NES) 2024 show that Dalit voters backed the INDIA bloc candidates in Uttar Pradesh, but not to the same extent in Bihar.

The findings of the NES reveal the same story in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Dalits preferred voting for candidates of the INDIA bloc in higher numbers compared to those of the NDA in Maharashtra, but not in Madhya Pradesh.

In Rajasthan, 46% of the Dalits voted for the Congress, while only 37% voted for the BJP candidates **(Table 2)**. In this State, the BJP had won all 25 seats in both the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections; it lost 10 Lok Sabha seats in 2024.

In Gujarat, 57% of Dalit voters voted for the BJP and only 43% voted for the Congress. The BJP won 25 of the total 26 Lok Sabha seats.

Dalit voters favoured the Congress in Haryana; Congress won five of the 10 seats. During the 2019 elections, the BJP had won all the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana.

The BJP won 20 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats and 78 of the 147 Assembly seats in Odisha. Among the Dalit voters, 46% voted for the BJP, 40% voted for the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), and 15% voted for the Congress/INDIA bloc in this State.

In neighbouring West Bengal, the Trinamool Congress maintained its dominance winning 29 out of 42 Lok Sabha seats; here, however, 45% of Dalits voted for the BJP, while a smaller share (41%) voted for the Trinamool, which managed to mobilise voters from various other social communities.

In the south

In Andhra Pradesh, the Dalit vote was more or less equally divided between the Telugu Desam Party and its allies, and the YSR Congress Party.

In Telangana, 46% of Dalits voted for the Congress/INDIA bloc, 23% for the BJP/NDA, and 31% for the Bhartiya Rashtra Samiti (BRS).

The good performance of the Congress in Karnataka is largely credited to the shift of the Dalit voters to the Congress (66% voted for the party).

The BJP's good performance in Assam is credited to the continued support of Dalits for the party. The NES 2024 data indicate that 70% of the Dalits voted for the BJP/NDA in Assam while only 12% voted for the Congress/INDIA bloc.

The data show the significance of the Dalit votes for the victory/good performance of political parties in various States, though they do not indicate that this may be the only reason for the party's victory in these States.

Sanjay Kumar is Professor and Co-director Lokniti-CSDS, Jyoti Mishra is a researcher at Lokniti-CSDS, and Vibha Attri is a researcher at Lokniti-CSDS

How Dalits voted

The tables were sourced from Centre for the Study of Developing Societies' Data Unit and the National Election Study (NES) 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS

Table 1 | The table shows the party and alliance-wise performance in Dalit reserved seats in the past three Lok Sabha elections

Poll year	Congress		UPA/INDIA		BJP		NDA		Others	
	Won	Vote (%)	Won	Vote (%)	Won	Vote (%)	Won	Vote (%)	Won	Vote (%)
2014	7	17.6	7	18.9	40	27.6	49	35.4	28	45.7
2019	6	16.7	12	22.1	46	35.3	54	44.3	18	33.6
2024	**20**	**20.8**	**33**	**31.9**	**29**	**34.5**	**39**	**42.4**	**12**	**25.7**

Table 2 | The chart shows how Dalits voted in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Figures are in percentage

States	INDIA bloc	NDA	Other state parties
Bihar	40	60	—
U.P.	38	26	32 BSP
M.P.	36	53	—
Maharashtra	46	35	—
Gujarat	43	57	—
Rajasthan	46	37	
Punjab	31	15	54 AAP
Haryana	67	25	—
Odisha	15	46	40 BJD
West Bengal	3	45	41 TMC
Andhra Pradesh	2	48	50 YSRCP
Telangana	46	23	31 BRS
Karnataka	66	33	
Assam	12	70	—

Dalits backed the INDIA bloc in Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Telanagna. The NDA candidates were supported in States such as Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam and Andhra Pradesh

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 29, 1974

Floods recede in Kerala: 38 dead

At least 38 persons have lost their lives in floods and landslips caused by heavy rains that ravaged the central and northern districts of Kerala during the weekend.

Twenty-eight of these deaths occurred in the worst-effected Idikki district in the High Ranges. Official confirmation was available only for 19, all in Devicolam taluk. Officials, however, feared that the toll might be even higher. The remaining ten deaths were in the Malabar region.

As reports of damage to property and standing crops were trickling in, the floods have started receding everywhere. Road communication between Cochin and the northern region, snapped yesterday following the inundation of patches of the national highway, was restored this afternoon as the rains ceased and the waters got drained out.

While information from Idikki was tardy in coming because of communication bottlenecks reports from other centres spoke of mass evacuation of people from low-lying areas. As many as 25,000 people were removed to places of safety in the three northern districts and another 1,000 in Ernakulam district.

A number of buses and passengers were reported trapped in several localities as boulders had blocked roads at many points in Idukki. In certain areas portions of roads had been completely washed away. Till to-night there was no information about these buses.

Five persons including three women were killed in a landslip in Vellathuval. Seven were killed in Koompanpara. Among these were three members of a family who left their house fearing that it was not safe and took shelter in another building which was razed to the ground when boulders came hurtling down. Ironically their houses remained intact. Three perished in a landslide at Adimali.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 29, 1924

Rebellion in Brazil

New York, July 28: The Cable Company has received a message from an authentic source stating that the revolutionary outbreak in Sao Paulo is concluded by a Government victory. The message adds the conditions in Sao Paulo are rapidly becoming normal.

From Page One

2 held day after three IAS aspirants drown

Holding placards saying "Old Rajinder Nagar is not safe", students said such a disaster was waiting to happen. Many flagged the issues of poor drainage systems and frequent water logging inside basements. A number of shopkeepers have also shut their shops and removed their boards from basement shops.

The police have formed multiple teams to investigate the incident and have asked the Delhi Fire Services to provide a report on the building and the basement which was being used as a library, but was mentioned as a "storeroom", a senior police officer said.

An FIR was registered based on the statement of a sub-inspector (SI), who said that the owner of the coaching centre, who was present at the time of the incident, had failed to produce the documents required to run a library in the basement. He also accepted that there was no drainage system in the basement, the FIR stated. The FIR was registered under Sections 105 (culpable homicide), 106(1) (death of any person by doing any rash or negligent act not amounting to culpable homicide), 115(2) (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 290 (negligent conduct with respect to pulling down, repairing or constructing building) and 35 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Some students protesting on a main road near the coaching centre were removed by the Delhi Police later in the evening. "Around 2.30 p.m. on Sunday, some students blocked both carriageways of Pusa Road near Karol Bagh metro station, which is an arterial road with many hospitals in the vicinity. They were repeatedly requested to not block the main road and since they refused to clear the main road even after an hour, they were removed from there, considering the massive public inconvenience and nearby hospitals," DCP (Central Delhi) M. Harshavardhan said.

Delhi Fire Services Chief Atul Garg said that it had taken eight hours to completely pump the water out of the basement.

The coaching centre said in a statement that it was "fully committed to supporting ongoing investigation into the tragic incident".

New job schemes to kick off soon: Somanathan

"We don't want to leave out the services or any sector from possible incentivisation if it will create jobs. We don't want to focus only on employees who draw up to ₹25,000 a month. You can pay the employee even one lakh, but our fiscal outgo is limited to the ₹25,000 level, but even 24% of that works out to 12% of a ₹50,000 salary, which is still a substantial subsidy," he emphasised

"We don't know where these salary figures stop. In some of these industries, even fresh hires get more than ₹50,000 to ₹60,000. But we have capped our outgo so the incentive is strongest for those earning ₹25,000," the official noted. 'Nothing to lose'The new scheme to facilitate internships for youth in the age bracket of 21 to 24 years has no connection with the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 announced in the Union Budget for 2023-24, and will be administered by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, not the Ministry of Skill Development, Mr. Somanathan underlined.

He stressed that the scheme is voluntary and will not require firms to invest funds from their own pockets, but rather through their mandated corporate social responsibility (CSR) spends, combined with government resources.

"We are also open to the company doing the skilling through companies in the backward or forward supply chains, if they can't do it themselves," Mr. Somanathan underlined.

"While everybody agrees that something is to be done, very few people have concrete ideas on what the government can do to promote employment. We are relying on basic micro economics, that a subsidy triggers additional expenditure in the item which is subsidised," he summed up.

Centre scraps auction of 3 critical mineral blocks

The Ministry, on March 14, put on sale seven critical mineral blocks in the third round of auction. The blocks that received fewer than three bids in the first tranche were notified under this round. These seven blocks pertain to critical minerals such as glauconite, graphite, nickel, platinum group element, potash, lithium, and titanium and are spread across Bihar, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

In June, the government cancelled the auction of 14 blocks of critical minerals launched in the second tranche. In the first tranche, the Centre had cancelled the auction for 13 of the 20 blocks put on sale due to a lukewarm response.

The Centre last month launched the fourth round of auctions of critical and strategic mineral blocks offering 21 mines in several States including Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.

Of these 21 blocks, 11 are new, spanning Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. These blocks contain a variety of minerals including graphite, glauconite, phosphorite, potash, nickel, platinum group element, phosphate and rare earth elements.

Dreams nipped in the bud, say kin of dead IAS aspirants

Students came from afar to utilise the better coaching facilities in the national capital, they say, but the pursuit of a dream career ended in a deadly tragedy in the flooded basement of a building

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

Students protest outside Rau's IAS Study Circle at Old Rajinder Nagar in Delhi on Sunday. PTI

Parents and relatives struggled to come to terms with the sudden death of three Civil Services aspirants who drowned in the basement of a private coaching centre in the Old Rajinder Nagar area of Delhi after it flooded following heavy rain on Saturday evening.

Several students staged a protest on Sunday in front of the building housing Rau's IAS Study Circle after the death of Shreya Yadav, 25, from Uttar Pradesh; Tanya Soni, 25, a resident of Telangana, and Nevin Dalvin, 28, from Kerala. "The students died of government negligence," an angry protester said.

Fear gripped Dharmendra Yadav, a professor at an engineering college in Ghaziabad, as he watched the events unfolding on TV on Saturday. When frantic calls to his niece, Shreya, went unanswered, he rushed to the Old Rajinder Nagar area, with the search tragically ending at the mortuary of the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital. Shreya had completed the B.Sc. degree in agriculture from a college in Uttar Pradesh. Her father, a farmer, struggled to pay her fees and the extended family pooled in money for her UPSC coaching, her uncle said.

"We sent her to Delhi and not Lucknow or Allahabad because of the environment. We thought the facilities here are better, she will be able to learn English. But look at what we have now? Everything we dreamed of is gone. Who will take responsibility?" he asked.

Shreya's elder brother is pursuing MA in journalism, while her younger brother is in Class 8.

Nevin was pursuing a Ph.D. in arts and aesthetics from Jawaharlal Nehru University and was also a UPSC aspirant. He was staying near his university and had gone to the library at the institute on Saturday evening, a relative said. His father is a retired Deputy Superintendent of Police in Kerala and his mother a geography professor.

Tanya Soni had joined the coaching centre less than two months ago. Her father works in Telangana. She has two siblings.

For many, harrowing memories of narrow escape from death

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Traumatised students who were inside the library in the basement of the private coaching institute in Delhi that flooded on Saturday evening shared harrowing accounts of their narrow escape.

They recalled how they were gasping for air and climbed on top of tables and chairs to protect themselves from the rising water.

A 20-year-old student said she had left the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle to eat, and just minutes later, it was flooded with water.

Around 30 students were in the library at the time, she said.

"I can never forget how my friends were gasping for air. They were struggling as the water was dirty. I remember a student crying because his sister was trapped inside," she said.

Another student said they were trapped inside but managed to get out when the glass door broke. "The force of the water was so much that the entire basement was flooded in just five minutes," the 23-year-old student said. "Since the glass door broke, we also got cuts. The students sitting near the door were able to escape. Those who were sitting at the back of the room found it difficult to escape and eventually drowned. I don't know how I was able to save myself," the student said.

'We were scared'

A 22-year-old student from Assam said, "The signal was weak, so we were not able to make phone calls. We just sat on top of tables and chairs for hours, as students were getting rescued slowly. All of us were scared."

"All students were sitting in the library. The staff asked us to leave as the library shuts around 7 p.m. When we reached near the door, the pressure of water was so much that in minutes, our knees were submerged. It was difficult to even climb the stairs due to the flow of water," he said.

"While ropes were thrown for students to come out, the water so dirty that we struggled to locate anything. We couldn't see. I was able to come out after someone pulled my rope," the student said.

UltraTech to acquire India Cements; buy 32.72% stake

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

UltraTech Cements aims to be one of the largest cement companies in the world and has set a target of 200 MTPA.

Aditya Birla Group flagship company UltraTech Cement will acquire a 32.72% stake in India Cements from promoters and their associates for ₹3,954 crore to expand its footprint in the highly competitive and fast-growing southern cement market, particularly Tamil Nadu.

Besides, UltraTech has also announced a ₹3,142.35-crore open offer to acquire another 26% share of India Cements Ltd. from its shareholders.

This announcement comes a month after Adani Group, the second largest cement maker announced the acquisition of Hyderabad-based Penna Cement for ₹10,422 crore, which will add 14 million tonnes per annum (MTPA), taking its capacity to 93 MTPA.

With an installed capacity of 154.86 MTPA of grey cement, UltraTech Cement leads the Indian cement industry. The company has an ambition to become one of the largest cement companies in the world and and has set a target for 200 MTPA.

The Board of the Aditya Birla firm approved the acquisition of 32.72% stake from promoters and their associates at ₹390 per share, according to a regulatory filing from UltraTech on Sunday.

It has entered into share purchase agreements for a 28.42% stake from promoters – N. Srinivasan, Chitra Srinivasan, Rupa Gurunath, and S.K. Asokh Baalaje – and a 4.3% share from Sri Saradha Logistics.

After the completion of the ₹3,954-crore deal, UltraTech's stake in India Cements will increase to over 55%, mandating it to go for the open offer as per the SEBI regulations.

Open offer

The Board of UltraTech has also approved an "open offer for up to 8.05 crore equity shares representing 26% of the equity share capital of the Target, at a price of ₹390 per equity share from the public shareholders of Target", the filing said.

The price offered by UltraTech is 4.1% higher than the India Cements share closing price of ₹374.60 on Friday. If fully subscribed, the open offer would cost UltraTech ₹3,142.35 crore.

In June, UltraTech acquired 23% of India Cements. It acquired Damani group's stake in India Cements through two block deals estimated at around ₹1,900 crore.

Cheer Indian athletes taking part in Paris Olympics: Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged people to encourage the Indian athletes participating in the Paris Olympics, stating that the grand sporting event gave players a chance to hoist the Tricolour on the world stage.

In his *Mann Ki Baat* address, Mr. Modi also congratulated the Indian students who bagged four gold and one silver medal in the International Mathematics Olympiad. He interacted with the students, who shared their experiences and insights.

In order to address the serious issue of drug abuse, Mr. Modi said the government had launched Manas, a special centre with a toll-free helpline (1933) for support and rehabilitation.

On the issue of tourism, he said it was a matter of pride for all Indians that the Charaideo Moidams in Assam had been included as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Modi mentions PARI

The Prime Minister also mentioned Project PARI, saying it was becoming a great medium to bring emerging artists on one platform to popularise public art. "You must have seen that beautiful paintings are made on the roadsides, on walls, in underpasses. These artefacts are made by the same artists who are associated with PARI...," he said.

Appreciating the efforts of over 250 women of Haryana's Rohtak who are associated with the handloom industry, Mr. Modi said, "...They decided to join the UNNATI self help group and received training in block printing and dyeing. These women who spread the magic of colours on clothes are earning lakhs of rupees today...Be it Sambalpuri saree of Odisha, Maheshwari saree of M.P. [Madhya Pradesh], Paithani of Maharashtra or the hand block prints of Vidarbha, Bhutiko shawls and woollen clothes of Himachal or Kani shawls of Jammu & Kashmir, the work of handloom artisans is spread across every corner of the country... On August 7, we will celebrate the National Handloom Day, " he said.

The Prime Minister also talked about the 'Tiger Day' observed on July 29 every year the world over.

Referring to the 'Kulhadi Band Panchayat' campaign in Rajasthan's Ranthambore, he said the local communities had taken an oath that they would not cut forest trees. "Due to this one decision, the forests here are becoming green once again, and a better environment is being created for tigers...Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra is one of the main habitats of tigers. The local communities here, especially Gond and Mana tribes, have taken rapid strides towards eco-tourism," he added.

Cargo carrier structurally stable and operational after fire: Coast Guard

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Indian Coast Guard carries out fire-fighting operations on *m.v. Maersk Frankfurt* off Goa coast. PTI

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has deployed five ships, two helicopters, and one Dornier aircraft for rescue operations over 10 days after *m.v. Maersk Frankfurt*, a Panamanian flag cargo carrier, reported a major fire on July 19.

The owners of the vessel have contracted a specialised salvage agency to take over firefighting efforts and for further disposal of the vessel while salvors and ocean-going tugs have already been roped in, the ICG said on Sunday.

The fire broke out around 80 nautical miles west of Goa, with the ICG launching rescue efforts under 'Operation Sahayata'.

"Further, ICG specialised pollution response team is on standby since the commencement of operations, in coordination with stakeholders, to effect suitable response in an unlikely event of oil spill. However, ICG's pollution preventive stance has ensured that no risk exists to the marine environment and coastal areas of Karnataka from the fire onboard MV Maersk Frankfurt," the ICG said in a statement.

Infrared imagery has revealed reduction in hotspots and smouldering is primarily restricted to "Bay 18 starboard side", it added.

The ICG ships are undertaking boundary cooling efforts and extinguishing sporadic minor flames that erupt from time to time due to the initial incineration of sealed containers, it said. More than 1,200 kg of dry chemical powder has been airdropped at the area of fire so far. Of the 21 foreign crew, one Filipino national is missing, while others are safe and in good health, the ICG said. "The vessel is structurally stable and remains operational."

The ICG has had two meetings with Director-General, Shipping, the State administration, stakeholders, ports, salvage agency, ship owners and management to review the progress and find an early end to the crisis.

Bring back Netaji's remains from Japan: grandnephew to PM

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The grandnephew of freedom fighter Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Chandra Kumar Bose, on Sunday appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bring back the "mortal remains of Netaji" from the Renkoji temple in Japan by August 18.

"Efforts must be made to bring the mortal remains of an immortal Hero to his home country- India, the land he liberated. My humble appeal to you is to bring back the mortal remains of Netaji from Renkoji to India by 18 August 2024," Mr. Bose wrote in a letter to Mr. Modi.

Mr. Bose said that after the release of several reports "it is evident that Netaji perished on 18 August 1945". "It is, therefore imperative that a final statement is made from the Government of India, so that false narratives about the Liberator of India are laid to rest," he said.

Mr. Bose, a former vice-president of West Bengal BJP and now convener of The Open Platform for Netaji, told *The Hindu* that it was unfortunate that the Centre was maintaining silence over the demands to bring Netaji's remains to the country.

"Netaji's daughter Anita Bose Pfaff has also raised the demand for bringing Netaji's remains to India. I have been also raising the issue for the past three years," he said.

‘The trajectory of the road is downhill in terms of debt to GDP’

Budget has steps to trigger consumption, but they are not in the nature of direct cash transfers, says Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan; for Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, funds for some projects will be only through concessional multilateral loans, which could be from World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JICA, AIIB... any of these institutions, which extend assistance to India anyway, he adds

INTERVIEW

T.V. Somanathan

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The Centre is confident of delivering on its Budget promise to arrange external financing for infrastructure development projects in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan said in an interview with *The Hindu*. He also elaborated on measures to rein in food inflation and spur consumption. Edited excerpts:

The Budget’s push for job creation is welcome, but a key reason for firms to hire is a rise in demand and capacity utilisation levels. Economists feel the consumption push is limited.

Well, there is a moderate tax cut for the salaried class mainly, but also for others to a less extent. There is a continued push on capital investment. There is a big push on schemes like the PM Gram Sadak Yojana [rural roads], the Awas Yojana [housing], both rural and urban. These are big spenders in rural areas and there is a big expansion with the former covering 25,000 more habitations. This is spending in rural areas by rural people who are employed in these roles. So, there is quite a big trust there. Similarly, the three crore new houses coming in, of which two crore would be in rural areas, is also actually a big trigger of consumption. So, I would argue there are measures here to trigger consumption, but they are not in the nature of direct cash transfers. They are consumption measures that act through creation of assets.

By the way, the employment incentives, when paid, will also result in some consumption. So it is consumption through some desirable objective rather than consumption through just transfer of cash, for the sake of consumption.

What about measures to rein in food inflation, that has been spiking overall price rise?

Whatever can be done on food inflation is being done. There is one important point which has not been very much highlighted in the Budget – a substantial provision for the Price Stabilisation Fund with the highest ever allocation (₹10,000 crore). We intend to use this more aggressively on the procurement of pulses and oilseeds, building up an adequate buffer stock in years of low prices, and then releasing it at times of high prices. This is an initiative to stabilise food prices, particularly on pulses and oilseeds. And we mean business about procuring it at MSP (Minimum Support Price) for these items.

Once we do that, farmers will tend to shift... We hope to see an expansion in the production of these items and reduce the volatility in those prices.

For Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, you have provided funds for some projects, and promised to arrange funds for others...

These will be only through concessional multilateral loans, which could be from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JICA, AIIB... any of these institutions, which considerably extend assistance to India anyway. They will lend to the Government of India, and the GoI will on-lend to the States, just as with any multilaterally-funded projects in States. The banks are willing, and we will be able to tie it up. Building of a capital is very much an infrastructure activity. We have not discussed [any interest subvention for the States] yet.

The Budget pivots from targeting the fiscal deficit after 2025-26, to a focus on the debt-to-GDP ratio. Would this entail a goal like reaching 40% of GDP over time?

It may not necessarily be 40%. We are saying it will decline gradually, how far and how fast, we are yet to determine, but it will be on a declining path.

So, after 2025-26, when we will be below 4.5% of GDP and that is a commitment, the intention is that it will be below 4.5% definitely. But what will be the deficit will also depend on how much we need to keep the debt going down. Should the debt go down by x% and when should it reach what level, those are yet to be determined. So, the deficit will be under 4.5%, but it doesn’t necessarily mean it would be 3% of GDP. And we can afford more than 3%, and still keep the debt declining steady. So that is the change of approach.

Will we have a road map for it or we will take a view each year?

That is something we will come up with. But we are saying one thing very clearly, that road map will be downwards. The trajectory of the road is downhill in terms of debt to GDP... how fast, what’s the gradient, will be [determined] on a year-to-year basis.

Biren meets PM to discuss the situation in Manipur

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Sunday, the first such meeting between them since ethnic violence erupted in the State more than 14 months ago, sources said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were present.

Mr. Singh, who is in Delhi for the past two days, earlier met the Prime Minister during two group meetings.

The meeting lasted around 20 minutes. “The meeting ended on a positive note,” another source said.

People in Manipur as well as the Opposition parties have questioned the PM’s silence over the Manipur issue.

The meeting comes on a day when Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey was removed and newly appointed Governor of Assam, Lakshman Prasad Acharya was given additional charge of the State.

In midnight reshuffle, President appoints six new Governors

BJP veteran Om Mathur has been appointed Governor of Sikkim, and former IAS officer K. Kailashnathan Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu appointed six new Governors and reshuffled three others, a Rashtrapati Bhavan communique has said.

The communique was issued past Saturday midnight.

BJP veteran Om Mathur has been appointed Governor of Sikkim, and Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey has been replaced by Lakshman Prasad Acharya, who has been moved from Sikkim to Assam and given additional charge of Manipur.

Mr. Mathur’s appointment comes amid speculation that he is a contender for the post of BJP president.

Another significant appointment is that of former IAS officer K. Kailashnathan – a close aide of PM Narendra Modi when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat – as the Lieutenant-Governor of Puducherry. On June 30, Mr. Kailashnathan stepped down as the Chief Principal Secretary to the Gujarat Chief Minister.

Om Mathur

The Rashtrapati Bhavan communique said the incumbent Governor of Assam, Gulab Chand Kataria, will now be the new Governor of Punjab as Banwarilal Purohit’s resignation has been accepted. He has also been appointed Administrator of the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

Jharkhand Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan, who was also holding additional charge of Telangana, has been appointed Governor of Maharashtra.

Former Union Minister for Labour and Employment Santosh Kumar Gangwar will be the new Jharkhand Governor, while former Deputy Chief Minister of Tripura Jishnu Dev Varma will be the new Telangana Governor.

A former Lok Sabha member from Assam, Ramen Deka, has been appointed Governor of Chhattisgarh, while a former Lok Sabha member from Mysore in Karnataka, C.H. Vijayashankar, will be the Meghalaya Governor. In Rajasthan, a BJP leader from Maharashtra, Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde, has been appointed Governor to succeed Kalraj Mishra.

“The above appointments will take effect from the dates they will assume charge of their respective offices,” a statement said.

‘Capital gains is the fastest growing income class, can be taxed higher’

M. Ramesh
CHENNAI

Capital gains is the fastest growing income class in India; it deserves to be taxed at a higher rate, on the grounds of raising revenues for the government and equity and fairness, Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan said on Sunday.

In a conversation with Raghuvir Srinivasan, Editor, *Businessline*, at a post-Budget discussion, Mr. Somanathan said the increase in capital gains taxes was motivated by three factors. The “primary motivation” was to simplify the tax structure. Earlier, there were varied rates for different asset classes and different periods of holding the assets. Now, in response to calls for simplification, the structure has been simplified. The taxes are 12.5% for all long-term capital gains and the duration for qualifying for long-term is one year for listed securities and two for unlisted.

The second motivation, he said, was to raise revenues. In this context, he observed that ‘capital gains’ was the fastest-growing asset class in the country. “India needs taxation – we have to gather taxes at moderate rates,” he said.

Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan with Raghuvir Srinivasan, Editor, *Businessline*; and N. Ram and N. Ravi, Directors, Kasturi and Sons Ltd., at a post-Budget discussion by *Businessline*. BIJOY GHOSH

Finally, stressing that it was his personal opinion and not necessarily that of the government, Mr. Somanathan said it was only proper to raise taxes on capital gains because a concessional rate of tax on capital gains is unfair to those who earn incomes through other means.

The Finance Secretary said capital gains taxes in India, even after the recent hike, were much lower than those in developed countries. As an example, he mentioned that Canada taxes capital gains at half the applicable rate, whereas most other countries have a flat rate. He admitted that there was a justification for capital gains taxes to be lower than applicable rates because capital gains occur intermittently and could push the taxpayer into a higher tax bracket in the year it occurs. But, what the lower rate should be, is a matter of the respective government’s decision. The Indian government has decided that long-term capital gains tax should be 12.5% and short-term 20%.

He also said that the country should get used to paying taxes at moderate rates, and said: “Our tax-GDP ratio is not high, our capital gains tax to overall tax ratio is much lower than in most other developed countries.” He said India “cannot have a world-class capital market and not expect to have some amount of reasonable taxes on capital gains”.

On the real estate front, he said the decision to remove “indexation” (taking into account the effect of inflation while calculating capital gains) would benefit the taxpayer, noting that if the capital gains arising out of a real estate transaction were to be higher than 10%, the 12.5% rate of tax, without indexation, would be better than the previous 20% with indexation.

Mr. Somanathan also noted that while the idea behind raising long-term and short-term capital gains taxes on asset classes such as securities was to raise revenues, for real estate gains, no revenue gains were expected.

Describing the 12.5 per cent rate as “liberal”, he said a person who makes capital gains on real estate has the option of avoiding a tax liability by reinvesting the gain in another property or buying capital gains bonds.

SP appoints Pandey as LoP

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party (SP) on Sunday appointed seven-time MLA Mata Prasad Pandey as the Leader of the Opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly.

The 81-year-old Brahmin leader represents the Itwa Assembly constituency in Siddharthnagar district. He has served as Speaker of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly twice, including between 2012-2017, and was elected for the first time in the 1980 Assembly election.

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Online tenders is invited by the Tender Inviting Authority, Tamilnadu Medical Services Corporation Ltd., Chennai — 600008, from the bidders meeting the eligibility criteria indicated in the tender document for the supply of **Reagents and Testing Kits** to TNMSC Ltd for two years from the date of acceptance of the tender

Sl. No	Description	e-Tender Reference	Tender Floating Period	e-Tender Submission Duration	Date and time of online opening of Technical Bids
1	Online Tender for fixing rate contract for Reagents and Testing Kits to TNMSC Limited for two years from the date of acceptance	e-015/M(P)/ RE-KIPM-KITS/ TNMSC/2024, Dated. 30.07.2024	30.07.2024 at 4.00 PM to 20.08.2024 upto 4.00 PM	08.08.2024 at 10.00 AM to 20.08.2024 upto 4.00 PM	21.08.2024 at 11.00 AM

The tender document can be downloaded and the tender shall be submitted at https://tntenders.gov.in. The tender document can also be downloaded at www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in for reference purpose.

Tender Inviting Authority / General Manager (Drugs)

DIPR/2639/Tender/2024

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्लूर (जिला), आं.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124

संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE

ई–निविदा सूचना सं. / e- Tender Notice No: CMG/C/CON/248716 तिथि/ Date. 25.07.2024

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, **“एसडीएससी शार के एसएमपीसी यूनिट–02 में विद्यमान विद्युत बाड़ा प्रणाली का मार्ग परिवर्तन एवं विस्तार” (₹250 लाख)** के लिए ई–निविदा के माध्यम से मद दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेज **05.08.2024** को **14:30** बजे तक डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। विस्तृत सूचना के लिए इच्छुक निविदाकार हमारी वेबसाइट **www.isro.gov.in** या **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** देखें।

On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for **“Rerouting & Extension of existing Power Fencing System at SMPC Unit-02, SDSC SHAR” (₹250 Lakhs)**; Tender documents can be downloaded up to **05.08.2024, 14:30** hrs. Interested tenderers may visit **www.isro.gov.in** or **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** for details.

हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

BJP leaders furious over Congress MLA comparing ‘Biharis’ to Bangladeshis

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Politics has intensified over the controversial statement of Jharkhand Congress MLA Shilpi Neha Tirkey in which she allegedly compared migrant workers hailing from Bihar to undocumented Bangladeshi nationals. The Congress MLA had suggested that the people of Bihar were responsible for the demographic change in the tribal-dominated State.

The Opposition BJP is continuously raising the issue of Bangladeshi infiltration in Jharkhand where the subject of demographic change is a contentious issue. The BJP leaders of Bihar and Jharkhand have hit back at Ms. Tirkey over her statement.

भारत सरकार
अंतरिक्ष विभाग
राष्ट्रीय सुदूर संवेदन केंद्र
हैदराबाद -500 037, तेलंगाना भारत
टेलीफोन : +040-23884173 / 74
फैक्स : +040-23884179

सत्यमेव जयते

Government of India
Department of Space
National Remote Sensing Centre
Balanagar, Hyderabad – 500 037, Telangana, India
Telephone: +040-23884173 / 74
Fax: +040-23884179

निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह / CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
ई–निविदा नोटिस / e-TENDER NOTICE

समूह निदेशक, सीएमजी, एनआरएससी, हैदराबाद द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्य के लिए ऑन–लाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।
Online tenders are invited by the Group Director CMG, NRSC, Hyderabad for the following works:

एनआईटी सं. NIT No.	कार्य का नाम / Name of work	अनुमानित प्राक्कलित लागत Approximate Estimated Cost (Rs.)	निविदा दस्तावेज डाउनलोड करने की अवधि Period during which the tender document can be downloaded	बोली अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि Last date for Bid uploading
NRSC/CMG/ NIT/ET/19/24 95/2024-25	एनआरएससी बालानगर परिसर, हैदराबाद में अग्नि सुरक्षा प्रणाली का पुनरुद्धार (सिविल और विद्युत् कार्य)। **Revamping of Fire protection system at NRSC Balanagar campus, Hyderabad (Civil and Electrical works)**	₹ 97.35 लाख / Lakhs	From : 29.07.2024 से To : 10.08.2024 तक	Up to 16.08.2024 16:00 बजे / Hrs
NRSC/CMG/ NIT/ET/20/24 019/2024-25	एनआरएससी बालानगर परिसर हैदराबाद में वीआरएफ एसी सिस्टम का आपूर्ति, स्थापना, परीसर और कमीशनिंग। **Supply, Installation Testing and Commissioning of VRF AC systems at NRSC Balanagar campus Hyderabad.**	₹ 17.40 लाख / Lakhs	From : 29.07.2024 से To : 10.08.2024 तक	Up to 16.08.2024 16:00 बजे / Hrs
NRSC/CMG/ NIT/ET/21/24 030/2024-25	एनआरएससी शादनगर परिसर में विस्तारित डाटा संटर (ब्लॉक सी एक्सटेंशन) की छत पर सौर थर्मो–रिफ्लेक्टिव पेंट प्रदान करना। **Providing solar thermo-reflective paint to terrace of extended data centre (Block C Extension) at NRSC Shadnagar Campus.**	₹ 14.00 लाख / Lakhs	From : 29.07.2024 से To : 10.08.2024 तक	Up to 16.08.2024 16:00 बजे / Hrs

विस्तृत एनआईटी एवं पात्रता मानदंड ईएमडी बोली संबंधित प्रलेख आदि www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO पोर्टल से देखा/डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। किसी प्रकार के संशोधन, समय विस्तार, स्पष्टीकरण आदि वेबसाइट पर अपलोड किया जाएगा और किसी समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशित नहीं किया जाएगा। बोलीकर्ता अद्यतन जानकारी हेतु नियमित रुप से वेबसाइट देखें।

Detailed NIT and eligibility criteria, EMD bidding document, etc. can be viewed /download from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO portal. All amendments, time extension, clarifications, etc. will be uploaded on website and will not be published in newspapers. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.

समूह निदेशक / Group Director
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह / Construction & Maint. Group

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

BWSSB invites tenders in two stage tender system from eligible contractors for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of the Works	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount
	Office of the Chief Engineer (Project), 3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.	
	IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(P)/ACE(P)-II/844/2024-25	**Date:26.07.2024**
1	Work of laying UGD lateral on the Outer Ring Road coming under 110 villages of Mahadevapura zone	Rs. 464.34 lakhs / Rs.6.97 lakhs
	Last date for receipt of tenders : **14.08.2024 upto 14:00 Hrs.** The bids will be opened on: **16.08.2024 at 15.00 Hrs.**	
	IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(P)/ACE(Cstr&DCW)/848/2024-25	**Date:26.07.2024**
2	Procurement of 5,00,000 Nos. of Water saving Aerator with maximum flow rate of 3LPM	Rs. 2,44,65,000/- / Rs. 3,67,000/-
	Last date for receipt of tenders : **14.08.2024 before 15:00 Hrs.** Technical Tenders will be opened on: **17.08.2024 at 12.00 Hrs.**	

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Project)

The details regarding the tender and participatin in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/1122/2024-25

INBRIEF

Jaishankar holds talks with U.S. counterpart in Tokyo

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Sunday held "wide-ranging" talks with his American counterpart Antony Blinken against the backdrop of an unease in India-U.S. ties following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia three weeks ago. Both Mr. Jaishankar and Mr. Blinken are in Tokyo to attend a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the four-nation Quad grouping. The talks between the External Affairs Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State also came amid Washington consistently seeking accountability from New Delhi in the case relating to the alleged foiled plot to kill Sikh extremist Gurupatwant Singh Pannun in New York. It is not immediately clear whether Mr. Modi's visit to Russia and the murder-for-hire plot figured in the Jaishankar-Blinken talks. PTI

CERT-In warns CrowdStrike users of phishing attacks

The Indian cyber security agency CERT-In has said that users impacted by the recent global computer outage were being targeted with phishing attacks. Fraudsters impersonating CrowdStrike support staff were offering to help them with system recovery tools and using the opportunity to install malware. According to a CERT-In advisory issued on Saturday, these attacks could "entice an unsuspecting user to install unidentified malware, which could lead to data leakage and crashes". The advisory asked users and organisations to configure firewalls to block 31 types of URLs, like 'crowdstrikeoutage[.]info' and 'www.crowdstrike0day[.]com' among others.

Modi advises CMs to ensure full coverage of Central and State-level welfare measures

At two-day meeting of Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled States, Prime Minister listens to presentation of programmes that can be implemented across States, says party is working for good governance

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged the Chief Ministers of BJP-ruled States to ensure saturation-level coverage of welfare programmes announced by them and the Centre without tinkering, and sat through presentations of programmes which could be replicated across those States.

The meeting of 13 Chief Ministers and 15 Deputy Chief Ministers held over the weekend was addressed by Mr. Modi and BJP president J.P. Nadda. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were present.

The '*Mukhyamantri Parishad*' is organised by the BJP at regular intervals, aimed at reviewing key schemes in the States following the best governance practices, and the delivery of Union government welfare initiatives.

The BJP leaders said that certain schemes in different States were singled out for detailed presentation by the Chief Ministers, including Uttar Pradesh's *Grameen Sachivalay Yojana* (secretariat in rural areas); the Assam government's campaign to quickly fill vacant government posts; efforts made by the Gujarat government to encourage solar power generation; the Bihar government's drive to stop illegal mining; and Tripura's *Aamar Sarkar* (my government) outreach.

Narendra Modi poses for a group picture with Rajnath Singh, J.P. Nadda, Amit Shah, Chief Ministers and Deputy Chief Ministers, at the party headquarters in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

'Working tirelessly'

"Our party is working tirelessly to further good governance and fulfil the aspirations of the people," Mr. Modi posted on social media platform X after the first part of the meeting on Saturday.

Chief Ministers Yogi Adityanath (Uttar Pradesh), Himanta Biswa Sarma (Assam), Bhajanlal Sharma (Rajasthan) and Mohan Charan Majhi (Odisha) were among the leaders who attended the meeting here. Those of Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Manipur, and Chhattisgarh were part of the deliberations. Uttar Pradesh Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya also attended the meeting.

The meeting comes in the wake of the presentation of the Union Budget, with the Opposition parties targeting the BJP-led government for allegedly ignoring other States at the expense of allies in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be responding to the debate on the Budget in Parliament this week.

'Secret changes have been made to draft Broadcasting Bill'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

As per a press note, the Bill seeks to replace the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995

The Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF) on Saturday decried "secret" changes to the draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, which expands regulatory requirements on online news and entertainment media.

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has met "selective industry representatives, without representation from civil society, journalists, or other key stakeholders", the IFF said in a statement, repeating concerns from civil society that the Bill would lead to further censorship implications for online platforms.

The Hindu has received one of these subsequent versions that has not been circulated in public, but is withholding its contents because the document reportedly contains identifying markers that can expose the identity of each recipient of the draft.

A press note for the only version of the Bill released for the public to comment on said that it is an attempt to replace the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. Streaming services are required in this version to constitute "content evaluation committees" to pre-screen content before it is released on their platforms.

The Bill also provides for the constitution of a Broadcast Advisory Council, with government membership, that would hear complaints against broadcasters. These requirements could be applied to streaming platforms and online influencers with a simple notification issued by the I&B Ministry. S. Meghnad, an online content creator, has titled a recent video on the topic: "This new law can shut down youtube journalists".

Every broadcaster covered under the Ministry's "regulatory ambit will be required to comply with a Code prescribed by the Union government, [and] failure to do so ... will lead to monetary penalties or even imprisonment", the IFF said.

The Union government has shown concern on the impact of those it calls "negative influencers". In a 2021 report, it said "some negative influencers give false narratives and discredit the Government" and that "these need to be constantly tracked so that proper and timely response can be given".

NTA announces CUET-UG results after a month's delay

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency (NTA) on Sunday declared the results of the Common University Entrance Test for undergraduate courses (CUET-UG).

The results were expected to be declared on June 30 but were delayed as controversies gripped the NTA.

The CUET-UG, which was conducted in the hybrid mode for the first time across the country in May, was cancelled in Delhi a night before the scheduled exam day over "logistical reasons". The test was held in the national capital later. A retest was also conducted for some students on July 19.

A total of 8,024 candidates scored full marks in business studies; followed by 5,141 in political science; 2,520 in history; 1,683 in English; and 1,602 in psychology.

The highest number of students appeared for the general test (7.09 lakh) and only one candidate got full marks. Every subject has at least a candidate scoring full marks.

The NTA, in a press release, said 13,47,820 candidates had registered for the exam, while 11,13,610 appeared.

Many students had flagged irregularities in the initial answer key, after which the answers were corrected in the final answer key. "Candidates were given an opportunity for the challenge from July 7 to 9 along with the Provisional Answer Key, Question Paper, and Recorded responses. In this duration, about 9,512 answer key challenges were received out of which 1,782 were unique challenges," the NTA said.

"The result of candidates is in the process of being shared with the universities. Candidates are advised to be in touch with the respective universities and Institutions for further details," it added.

Delhi University officials had earlier said that they were hoping to begin classes for first year by August 16. Registrar Vikas Gupta said, "We are expecting the results to be shared by the NTA tentatively by Wednesday. We will then begin the admission process, after which students can opt for the course preferences."

(With PTI inputs)

CITES eases norms for agarwood export; move to benefit lakhs of farmers from the Northeast

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

India has successfully prevented the inclusion of agarwood (*Aquilaria malaccensis)* in the Review of Significant Trade (RST) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The CITES also notified a new export quota of the highly valuable and aromatic resinous wood and oil of the tree from India from April 2024.

Since agarwood is cultivated in different parts of India, especially in the northeastern States, this development is going to benefit lakhs of farmers in certain districts of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, and Tripura.

Agarwood extract is used in the preparation of incense, air fresheners, purifiers as well as medicines. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Aquilaria malaccensis was listed in Appendix II of the CITES (a category of species that are not necessarily threatened but whose trade must be controlled) for the first time in 1995 based on India's proposal at CoP9 in 1994.

The removal of India from the RST for *Aquilaria malaccensis* was achieved based on a non-detriment findings (NDFs) study of the plant species by the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

The NDF prepared by the BSI suggested that the harvest of plants should be allowed from home, community gardens, plantations on leased/*patta* lands, private or community plantations, or any other types of small-scale or large-scale plantations.

However, the NDF added that "harvesting of plants or collection of seeds/seedlings/saplings and other propagules should not be allowed from the existing wild populations or plants in the protected areas and reserve forests".

The export quota recommended by the NDF for 2024-2027 for agarwood chips and powder/sawdust is 1,51,080 kg a year and agarwood oil is 7,050 kg a year.

"The absence of an export quota for a long period and other trade-related restrictions in India caused an increase in informal trade/export of agar chips, oil, powder etc. to the Middle East and other foreign countries. It also caused an increase in costs of agarwood chips and oil in the global market as India is a major agarwood trading nation with which most importing countries have long trade records," the NDF report said.

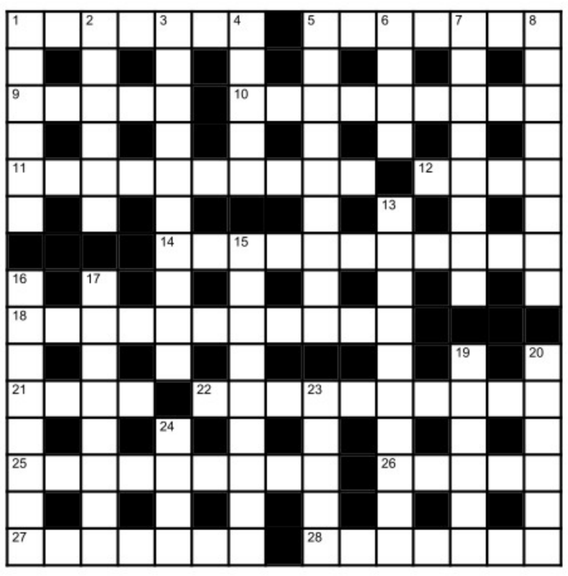
Despite the export ban, the illegal trade of agarwood and its derivatives has continued in India, with more than 1.25 tonne of chips and six litres of oil/derivatives reportedly seized in six States between 2017 and 2021, a report by TRAFFIC, an NGO, said.

TH CROSSWORD + 14239

(set by Karaoke)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Mrs. Mop hugs doctor and engineer in the meeting place (7)
5 Light bang in rift (3,4)
9 Doctor enthralled by Chinese leader's dance (5)
10 American traffic policewoman fulfilled fantastic dream to conceive child inside (5,4)
11 4444 - This is how some animals walk! (10)
12 Conclusions of far too long creature (4)
14 Friendly personal assistant leaves for public transport that's likely to catch fire (11)
18 Perhaps lives with long dream for this? (6,5)
21 Economical with the truth and fiction ultimately, right? (4)
22 Foreign enemy wins second tournament after taking hint to become rich (10)
25 Feel depressed? Come to earth (9)
26 Vagrant mixing essence of lemon in gin (5)
27 Studio settled dues for strips (7)
28 As may be seen regularly, Indian cars go up in smoke (7)

Down

1 Usual encouragement gets man to forget exhaustion primarily (6)
2 Provide room and protective garment for player (3,3)
3 Toady spoils fight, Spooner says (10)
4 Ladies' man comes after Quebec, NATO revealed (5)
5 Worried about going into land in skirt (3,6)
6 A female forgot expedition gear (4)
7 One bear fights with a creature that lives without oxygen (8)
8 Position announced after exercise causes strain (8)
13 Ties of old opposite numbers (10)
15 World-shattering doctors acquiring English books by American! (9)
16 Out-of-the-way ladies to go berserk (7)
17 I run for gin of poor quality (4,4)
19 Item held by moneylender's wife in fashionable container (2,4)
20 Setter's work with insolvable clue, primarily thoughtless (6)
23 Shrub from old Madras central (5)
24 Peel off outhouse (4)

SUDOKU

6				9	5		8	
	9						2	
	7	5		8		9		
		2			3			
5	3						4	9
			1			2		
		6		1		5	3	
	5						7	
	1		7	5				2

No.SS6234 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

V	I	T	A	M	I	N	C		T	E	A	P	O	Y
	L		F		N		O		E		N		Z	
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	H		O		B				S		O		N	
M	E	N	T	A	L		B	R	I	S	T	L	E	S
	A				O		A		L		A			
B	L	I	G	H	T	I	N	G	S		T	H	U	G
	T		A				D				O		N	
C	H	I	T		T	R	A	N	S	C	R	I	P	T
			E		I		N		C				L	
N	E	W	M	E	D	I	A		I	N	R	O	A	D
	J		O		B				S		O		N	
F	E	R	N	T	I	C	L	E	S		T	A	N	K
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E	T	H	Y	L	S		C	U	R	B	S	I	D	E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	6	8	2	5	9	1	7	3
1	9	3	4	7	8	6	5	2
2	7	5	6	1	3	9	8	4
6	2	1	5	8	4	7	3	9
7	8	4	9	3	6	2	1	5
5	3	9	7	2	1	8	4	6
3	4	6	1	9	7	5	2	8
9	1	2	8	4	5	3	6	7
8	5	7	3	6	2	4	9	1

FAITH

Sakubai's *prema* bhakti

Our scriptural history is replete with instances of God coming down to help His devotee, happy to be heeding to their supplicating call, said P. Swaminathan in a discourse. Sakubai, born to pious parents in Maharashtra, was extremely devoted to Lord Vittala. Married at 12 years, and suffering torture at her in-laws' house, she carried out her never ending chores thinking of Vittala. When a group of savants pass by the river where she is washing clothes, their cries 'Panduranga, Vittala', draws her like a magnet and she proceeds towards Pandharpur. Lord Vittala, aware of Sakubai's devotion, takes her place in her in-laws' house. He promises His Consort Rukhmini that He would return once Sakubai returns from Pandahrpur.

Presenting Himself as Sakubai, He suffers all the hardship that the young devotee did. Sakubai, meanwhile, is ecstatic serving the Lord in Pandharpur and her *prema* bhakti is visible to all. One day she faints and passes away, and other devotees complete her last rites. Goddess Rukhmini, realising that Vittala would continue to impersonate Sakubai until she reappeared in her marital home, revives Sakubai and sends her home. When news of her death is conveyed to her in-laws, they realise that none but Vittala had been serving them in the guise of Sakubai and repent for their sins.

Some sparkle for the golden years

COVERNOTE

New regulatory measures take away some of the hard edges of investing in pension policies; but until pensions are taxable, elephant stays firmly in room

K. Nitya Kalyani

Annuities, or pension policies, which form a very large and promising market and over which life insurers have a monopoly, haven't realised their true potential in India as Income Tax on pensions takes the sheen away.

Unlocking potential

However, here are some sweeteners that unlock the investment's potential for the policyholders.

IRDAI, in its recent master circular on life insurance, says that insurers may offer loans under annuity policies. It also specifies more flexibility in buying an annuity policy at the time of vesting (when the deferment period, if any, ends and the pension payout begins) or at the time of surrender. The nominee, too, gets more flexibility if the policyholder dies before vesting. What truly unlocks policy value at times of need is the new partial withdrawal facility.

Partial withdrawal

In the case of individual pension policies during the deferment period, the policyholder can make a partial withdrawal under certain terms and conditions. Up to 25% of the total premiums paid can be withdrawn after three years of commencement of the policy. The partial withdrawal will be counted towards commuted portion of the surrender/vesting benefit. Yet, the policy will not be terminated and the death or health sum assured cannot be adjusted downward due to the withdrawal.

This facility is allowed only three time during the deferment period and for stipulated reasons, somewhat like premature withdrawal from an employee or public provident fund account. They include higher education/ marriage of a child, acquiring a first home and for medical expenses. Most interestingly, two permitted reasons for withdrawal are skill development/ re-skilling or any other self-development activities and the establishment of own venture or any start-ups.

Freedom on buying annuity

When the annuity policy vests, or when you surrender it, you can commute 60% of the accumulated amount and have to use the rest to buy an annuity from the same insurance company you have the policy with. Now, you have the flexibility to use 50% of the policy proceeds, net of commutation, to buy an annuity policy from any other insurance company. If the policy proceeds net of commutation are not enough to buy an annuity, you can withdraw the entire amount.

Should the annuity policyholder die during the deferment period, the nominee can commute up to 60% and use the rest to buy a policy (and withdraw it if its insufficient to buy an annuity) or, can simply withdraw the entire policy proceeds.

And lastly, the loan. Life insurers now have to offer policy loans, a definite breather to those contributing to retirement, but need funds urgently to tide over bad patches.

This is only for policies with the 'Return of Purchase Price' option (one of the half-a-dozen options when you start a deferred annuity including annuity for life or guaranteed annuity for a certain number of years or joint annuity with spouse). The loan amount is also based on the eligible surrender value and obviously only during the deferment period and not after the vesting of the policy.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Right choice: Loan applicants must compare interest rates/features of as many lenders as possible. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Study personal loan rates of various lenders

The best option would be the one charging the lowest interest rates; however, features such as loan tenure, processing fee etc. must be considered during loan selection process

KEEPING A TAB

Gaurav Aggarwal

> Prospective applicants should start the process by first contacting lenders with whom they already maintain deposits or have availed loans/credit cards

> The should visit online financial marketplaces to compare interest rates and other loan features offered by other banks and NBFCs based on their credit profile

The personal loan interest rates offered by various lenders to the same applicant can vary widely depending on credit-pricing policies and the credit profile of the applicant. Thus, prospective loan applicants should compare the interest rates and other personal loan features of as many lenders as possible.

Many banks offer such loans at preferential interest rates to existing customers. They also offer pre-approved personal loans with instant disbursal to existing customers with good credit profiles. Thus, prospective borrowers should first check with the lenders with which they have deposit accounts or have availed loans or credit cards. The personal loan interest rates offered by those lenders can be used as a benchmark to compare interest rates of other banks/NBFCs.

This should be followed up by visiting online financial marketplaces to compare the rates offered by other banks and NBFCs. Then, they should opt for the lender offering the lowest interest rates and/or quickest disbursal.

Tenure-repayment

Longer repayment tenures reduce the EMI burden but increase the total interest cost. The opposite would be true for borrowers choosing shorter tenures for loans. Thus, applicants should choose loan tenure primarily on the basis of repayment capacity. However, prospective borrowers should not sacrifice their fresh monthly contributions towards their unavoidable financial goals.

Note, lenders usually prefer loan applicants whose monthly loan repayment obligations, including the EMI of the proposed personal loan, do not exceed 55-60% of the monthly income.

Those loan applicants exceeding this limit can either opt for longer repayment tenures and/or opt for lower loan amounts to bring EMI within the aforementioned ratios.

Processing fee, charges

Apart from the interest cost, a personal loan borrower would also incur processing charges, documentation fee, etc. while availing the loan. While the processing fee can range anywhere from 0.5% to 4% of the loan, some lenders waive it during festive season while some other lenders cap the processing charges irrespective of the loan amount. As the processing fee can have a significant impact on the overall cost of borrowing, loan applicants should use online APR calculators to compare loan offers based on total borrowing cost.

Check charges, curbs

Some lenders do not allow loan foreclosure or prepayment until the repayment of a pre-determined number of EMIs. Lenders also charge 3-5% on prepaying or foreclosure.

However, some public sector banks offer personal loans at floating interest rates, which, as per the RBI norms, are not allowed to charge prepayment or foreclosure fee.

Thus, personal loan applicants seeking to keep the option of part-prepayments/foreclosure open should compare the prepayment related charges and the flexibility allowed in prepayment/foreclosure during the loan selection process. Such applicants should prefer the lender charging nil or low prepayment charges with maximum possible flexibility.

Turnaround time

With the advent of end-to-end digital onboarding processes, most lenders have started offering digital personal loans with quick/instant disbursal. Many lenders also offer pre-approved personal loans to existing customers with instant or same-day disbursal. However, depending on documentation and loan processing, lenders may still take up to seven days to disburse personal loans from the date of loan application.

Therefore, loan applicants requiring quick disbursal should also compare the lenders on the basis of the turnaround time for loan disbursal.

Conclusion

For most personal loan applicants, the best personal loan option would be the one charging the lowest interest rates. However, personal loan features such as the loan tenure (based on one's repayment capacity), processing fees and turnaround time for loan disbursal should also be considered during the loan selection process.

Prospective applicants should start the process by first contacting lenders with whom they already maintain deposits or have availed loans/credit cards.

Then, they should visit online financial marketplaces such as Paisabazaar.com to check and compare personal loan interest rates and other loan features offered by other banks and NBFCs based on their credit profile.

(The writer is Chief Business Officer (Unsecured Lending) Paisabazaar)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	10.50 onwards	10,747 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to Rs 4,999
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 5.5%
State Bank of India	11.35-15.50	10,959-12,027	2,192-2,405	1.50%(Min Rs 1,000 to Max Rs 15,000)
ICICI Bank	10.80 onwards	10,821 onwards	2,164 onwards	Up to 2%
Bank of Baroda	11.15-18.75	10,909-12,902	2,182-2,580	Up to 2%(Min Rs 1,000 Max Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
Bank of India	10.85-14.85	10,834-11,856	2,167-2,371	0.50%-1%(Min Rs 250 Max Rs 10,000)
Canara Bank	10.95-16.40	10,859-12,266	2,172-2,453	0.50% (Maximum Rs 2,500)
Punjab National Bank	10.40-17.95	10,772-12,683	2,144-2,537	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.99-15.00	10,621-11,895	2,124-2,379	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49 onwards	10,994 onwards	2,199 onwards	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.35-15.45	10,959-12,013	2,192-2,403	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	10.75-13.50	10,809-11,505	2,162-2,301	0.50%-1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.45-12.85	11,236-11,338	2,247-2,268	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 750)
IDFC First Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 2%
Bank of Maharashtra	10.00-12.80	10,624-11,325	2,125-2,265	1% (Rs 1,000-Rs 10,000)
Karnataka Bank	13.43	11,487	2,297	Up to 2% of loan (Min. Rs 2,500 Max. Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	1.5% -3.5%

Car Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	8.70 - 10.45	10,307 - 10,735	Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.75 - 10.60	10,319 - 10,772	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.90 - 12.70	10,355 - 11,300	Up to Rs 2,000
Canara Bank	8.70 - 12.70	10,307 - 11,300	0.25% (Maximum Rs 2,500)
Bank of India	8.85 - 10.85	10,343 - 10,834	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 5,000)
UCO Bank	8.45 - 10.55	10,246 - 10,759	Nil
State Bank of India	8.95 - 10.00	10,367-10,624	Up to Rs 1,500
IDBI Bank	8.80 - 9.65	10,331 - 10,294	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.70 - 13.00	10,307 - 11,377	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.85 - 12.00	10,343 - 11,122	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	9.10 onwards	10,403 onwards	Up to 2%
HDFC Bank	9.20 onwards	10,428 onwards	0.50% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	8.88 - 11.37	10,350 - 10,964	0.60% (Rs 3,000 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
South Indian Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	0.75% (Max: Rs 10,000)
IDFC First Bank	9.75 onwards	10,562 onwards	Up to Rs 10,000
City Union Bank	14.45 - 14.95	11,751 - 11,882	1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders
**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 800 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.25% to borrowers having credit scores of 750-799.

Rates and charges as on July 24 **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

Use Sortino Ratio for goal-based investment

THINKINVESTOR

Sortino Ratio (SR) is more appropriate for goal-based investments in mutual funds; It would be useful if Asset Management Companies (AMCs) also disclose this metric alongside IR

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Previously, in this column, we discussed SEBI's proposal for asset management companies (AMCs) to disclose Information Ratio (IR) for each of their funds. IR is appropriate for investing surplus cash as such investments do not have a time horizon nor the need to earn a required return to achieve a life goal. Sortino Ratio (SR) is more appropriate for goal-based investments in mutual funds. Here, we discuss why SR is a better measure and why it would be useful if AMCs also disclose this metric alongside IR.

Downside risk

For goal-based investments, you must define risk and required return. The required return is the minimum return your investment must earn over a given time frame to accumulate the money needed to achieve desired goal. Call this Minimum Acceptable Return or MAR. This is the expected post-tax compounded annual return.

The risk is goal-based investments can earn lower than MAR in any year during the time horizon for a goal. So, downside deviation is a better measure of risk than standard deviation, for the latter measures both the upside and downside deviation. To determine MAR, you must define the time horizon, the amount needed to achieve the goal and the amount you can save. If MAR is 8.5%, it means your combined investments in equity and bonds will need to earn 8.5% annually to achieve the goal.

Suppose the pre-tax expected return on equity is 12% and post-tax return is 10.5%. The SR is calculated as the excess return of the fund over the pre-tax equity MAR divided by downside deviation of returns below the equity MAR. This tells you about the risk of investing in the fund to achieve a goal as SR is related to MAR.

Conclusion

The MAR to determine SR is the expected pre-tax annual return on equity and is independent of the goal you pursue. Hence, AMCs can report SR for each fund alongside the IR. Importantly, AMCs must use uniform equity MAR for determining SR. Otherwise, comparing SR among peer funds may not be meaningful. It would be useful to have AMCs disclose SR over one-, three-, five- and 10-year periods and since inception. The time horizon is very specific to each goal. So, you must determine the consistency of a fund's SR in relation to your goal's time horizon based on the information provided.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

DUBLIN

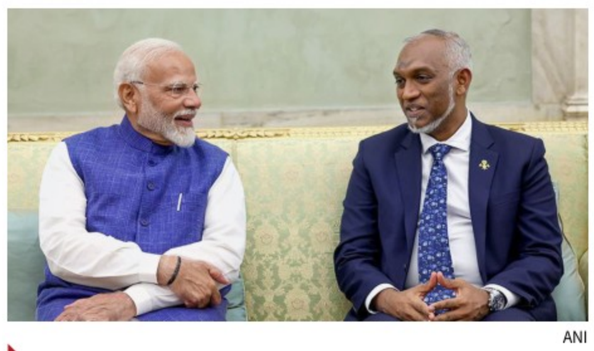
Edna O'Brien, Ireland's daring chronicler of women's lives, dead

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Edna O'Brien, the author who wrote of her native Ireland in such febrile prose, steeped in sex, love and religious angst, that it sparked national outrage and led to her self-imposed exile, died aged 93. Her novels *The Country Girls* and included *The Lonely Girl* and *Girls in Their Married Bliss*, scandalised Irish society. REUTERS

MALE

Muizzu thanks India and China for supporting the Maldives' economy



ANI

President Mohamed Muizzu thanked India and China for helping strengthen the Maldives' fragile economy, highlighting the importance of the two countries in addressing the Island nation's looming debt crisis. His comments came at an event held to mark the 59th anniversary of the country's independence. PTI

DHAKA

Mobile Internet services restored in violence-affected Bangladesh

AFP

The mobile Internet connection was restored in Bangladesh on Sunday, 10 days after it was shut down by the authorities across the country to stop the spread of fake news on social media amidst the deadly nationwide violence over reforms in the quota system in government jobs. The violence claimed the lives of 205 people. PTI

SHANGHAI

Landslip brings down Chinese guest house, killing 15 persons

AP

A landslip caused by flooding in central China's Hunan province destroyed a guesthouse and killed 15 persons on Sunday. The landslip was caused by flash flooding on a mountain, which destroyed the guesthouse. More than 300 emergency personnel were sent to the scene while six injured persons were found. AFP

Five killed in Israeli strike on Gaza camp for civilians

Agence France-Presse
GAZA STRIP

The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said an Israeli strike on Sunday hit tents at a declared safe zone in the Palestinian territory's south, killing at least five persons.

A witness said a newborn was among the dead in Al-Mawasi near Khan Younis city, where tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians have sought refuge from the war. Since Monday, Israeli forces have operated in and around Khan Younis.

"Five martyrs and seven wounded have been transferred to Nasser hospital" in Khan Yunis, an official said.

Israel vows to avenge strike that killed 12 in Golan Heights

Iran warns of 'unforeseen consequences' if Israel attacks Lebanon; Western powers, including France and Germany, condemn the attack blamed on Hezbollah, and appeal for calm

Agence France-Presse
MAJDAL SHAMS

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant on Sunday vowed to "hit the enemy hard" after rocket fire from Lebanon killed 12 youth in the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights and again raised fears that the war in Gaza will spread.

Iran warned Israel any new military "adventures" in Lebanon could lead to "unforeseen consequences". Western powers, including France and Germany, condemned the attack and appealed for calm.

Israel's Army called it "the deadliest attack on Israeli civilians" since the October 7 attack.

Last rites: Druze clergymen at the funeral on Sunday of the youth killed in a rocket strike at a soccer field in the Golan Heights. AP

Israel blamed Lebanon's Hezbollah movement for the attack but the Iran-backed group said it had "no connection" to the incident. It said, however, that it had fired one such rocket on Saturday toward an Israeli military target in the Golan.

The rocket fire in Majdal Shams, whose population are Arabic-speaking Druze, prompted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to return early from the U.S. Upon arrival he went immediately into a security Cabinet meeting.

He said "Hezbollah will pay a heavy price" for the attack, "a price it has not paid before."

Israel's military said later on Sunday it had hit Hezbollah targets "both deep inside Lebanese territory and in southern Lebanon".

Venezuela casts ballots as Maduro warns of 'bloodbath'

Agence France-Presse
CARACAS

Venezuelans voted on Sunday between continuity in President Nicolas Maduro or change in rival Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia amid high tension following the incumbent's threat of a "bloodbath" if he loses.

Polls suggest the vote poses the biggest threat yet to 25 years of "Chavismo," the populist movement founded by Mr. Maduro's predecessor and mentor, Hugo Chavez.

But analysts say Mr. Maduro is unlikely to concede defeat.

Mr. Maduro, 61, is seeking a third six-year term at the helm of the once wealthy petro-state that saw its GDP drop 80% in a decade, pushing more than seven million of its 30 million citizens to emigrate.

He is accused of locking up critics and harassing the opposition in a climate of rising authoritarianism.

After casting his vote in the capital on Sunday, Mr. Maduro vowed to "make sure" the results were respected.

His contender, Gonzalez Urrutia, a 74-year-old former diplomat, called on his compatriots to turn out in large numbers "to transform your future" in what "will undoubtedly be the most important democratic expression of the people in recent years."

Fresh hope: Voters line up outside a polling station during presidential elections in Caracas on Sunday. AP

Iran's Khamenei formally grants Pezeshkian presidential powers

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gave his official endorsement of Masoud Pezeshkian as the Islamic republic's ninth President on Sunday, following snap elections won by the reformist camp's candidate.

In a message read by the director of Mr. Khamenei's office, he said: "I endorse the vote (for) the wise, honest, popular and scholarly Mr Pezeshkian, and I am appointing him as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran".

The new reformist President is due to be sworn in before parliament on Tuesday.

New chapter: Ayatollah Ali Khamenei delivering the endorsement letter to President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday. AFP

The endorsement ceremony was held in the capital Tehran in the presence of senior Iranian officials and foreign diplomats, and broadcast on state TV.

It took place as banks and most government offices were ordered shut nationwide on Sunday to tackle an extreme heatwave.

Following the event, acting President Mohammad Mokhber handed over official responsibilities to 69-year-old Mr. Pezeshkian.

V-P appointed

Later on Sunday, Mr. Pezeshkian appointed reformist Mohammad Reza Aref, 72, as his first Vice-President, according to an announcement carried by state TV.

Mr. Aref has represented Tehran in parliament and served as first Vice-President and Communications Minister under Iran's last reformist President Mohammad Khatami, who held office from 1997 to 2005.

U.S. revamps military posts in Japan to counter China

Reuters
TOKYO

The United States said on Sunday it would revamp its military command in Japan to deepen coordination with its ally's forces, as the two countries labelled China the "greatest strategic challenge" facing the region.

The announcement followed security discussions in Tokyo between U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin and their respective Japanese counterparts, Yoko Kamikawa and Minoru Kihara.

Italy and China sign a 3-year action plan during Meloni's visit

Associated Press
BEIJING

Her five-day visit comes several months after Italy dropped out of China's BRI plan

Italy and China signed a three-year action plan on Sunday to implement past agreements and experiment with new forms of cooperation, Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on an official visit to the Chinese capital.

"We certainly have a lot of work to do and I am convinced that this work can be useful in such a complex phase on a global level, and also important at a multilateral level," she said in remarks at the start of a meeting with Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

Her five-day visit comes several months after Italy dropped out of China's Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of Chinese leader Xi Jinping to build power and transportation infrastructure around the world to stimulate global trade while also deepening China's ties with other nations.

36 killed in armed clashes between two Pak. tribes

Press Trust of India
PESHWAR

At least 36 people were killed and 162 others injured in armed clashes between two tribes fighting over a piece of land in Pakistan's restive tribal district in northwest. Officials said heavy clashes started five days ago in Boshera in Upper Kurram district.

Officials brokered a truce between Shia and Sunni tribes in Boshera, Malikhel and Dandar areas a short while ago. However, firing is still continuing in other parts of the district.

Sport

Resilient Sri Lanka upends India for Asia Cup glory

CRICKET

Press Trust of India
DAMBULLA

Skipper Chamari Athapaththu's turbo-charged fifty combined well with the unbeaten half-century of Harshitha Samarawickrama as a resilient Sri Lanka carved an eight-wicket win over defending champion India to bag its maiden women's Asia Cup title here on Sunday.

Tasked with hunting down a strong target of 166, Sri Lanka served well by Athapaththu (61b, 43b, 9x4, 2x6) and Samarawickrama (69 n.o., 51b, 6x4, 2x6) and finished at 167 for two in 18.4 overs. The duo added 87 runs as Lankans always stayed ahead of their opponents.

Athapaththu scored through almost every reachable place on the field. But at the other end, Samarawickrama lacked the power of her senior but she offset that with clever placings, such as reverse sweeps off Deepti Sharma and Radha Yadav. But she picked up the tempo when Sri Lanka was safer.

In between, Deepti managed to bowl Athapaththu with a fuller delivery that sparked celebrations among the Indians.

But those merriments were premature as Samarawickrama found an able sidekick in Kavisha Dilhari (30 n.o., 16b, 1x4, 2x6) as the duo added 73 runs off just 40 balls to guide their side home.

Earlier, Smriti Mandhana's conditions-defying half-century (60, 47b, 10x4) had powered India to a fighting 165 for six and she received backing from Jemimah Rodrigues (29, 16 balls, 3x4, 1x6) and Richa Ghosh (30, 14 balls, 4x4, 1x6).

Victory dance: A resilient Sri Lanka dethroned the Indians in spectacular fashion. ICC

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Shafali Verma lbw b Dilhari 16 *(19b, 2x4)*, Smriti Mandhana c Athapaththu b Dilhari 60 *(47b, 10x4)*, Uma Chetry lbw b Athapaththu 9 *(7b, 1x4)*, Harmanpreet Kaur c Nilakshika b Nisansala 11 *(11b, 1x4)*, Jemimah Rodrigues run out 29 *(16b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Richa Ghosh c Sanjeewani b Prabodhani 30 *(14b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Pooja Vastrakar (not out) 5 *(6b)*, Radha Yadav (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (w-3, nb-1): 4; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 165.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-44 (Shafali, 6.2 overs), 2-58 (Uma, 8.1), 3-87 (Harmanpreet, 11.6), 4-128 (Jemimah, 16.1), 5-133 (Smriti, 16.5), 6-164 (Richa, 19.4).

SRI LANKA BOWLING

Priyadharshani 4-0-31-0, Prabodhani 3-0-27-1, Sugandika 4-0-23-0, Dilhari 4-0-36-2, Nisansala 2-0-20-1, Athapaththu 3-0-28-1.

SRI LANKA

Vishmi Gunaratne run out 1 *(3b)*, Chamari Athapaththu b Deepti 61 *(43b, 9x4, 2x6)*, Harshitha Samarawickrama (not out) 69 *(51b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Kavisha Dilhari (not out) 30 *(16b, 1x4, 2x6)*; Extras (lb-4, w-1, nb-1): 6; Total (for two wkts. in 18.4 overs): 167.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-7 (Vishmi, 1.4), 2-94 (Athapaththu, 11.6).

INDIA BOWLING

Renuka 3-0-23-0, Pooja 3.4-0-29-0, Deepti 4-0-30-1, Tanuja 4-0-34-0, Radha 4-0-47-0.

Toss: India.
PoM: Harshitha.
PoS: Athapaththu.
Sri Lanka won by eight wickets with eight balls to spare.

England routs West Indies

Reuters
BIRMINGHAM

England captain Ben Stokes butchered the West Indies bowling attack after Mark Wood had taken five wickets to lead England to a crushing 10-wicket win before tea on the third day of the final Test at Edgbaston on Sunday.

Stokes hit the quickest Test half century by an English batter, and was unbeaten on 55 off 28 balls as England took 7.2 overs to reach its target of 82.

Wood claimed five wickets in four overs – three in a single over – to skittle out the visitor for 175 in its second innings.

The scores: West Indies 282 & 175 in 52 overs (Louis 57, Hodge 55, Wood 5/40) lost to England 376 & 87/0 in 7.2 overs (Stokes 57 n.o.). **PoM:** Wood; **PoS:** Atkinson.

MOTORSPORTS WRAP

No stopping Aditya in Rally of Coimbatore

COIMBATORE: Aditya Thakur and his co-driver Virender Kashyap sealed the overall title in the Rally of Coimbatore, the third round of the Blueband – FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship (INRC) for four wheelers here on Sunday.

The results: INRC overall: 1. Aditya Thakur & Virender Kashyap, 2. Karna Kadur & Musa Sherif, 3. Harkrishan Wadia & Kunal Kashyap.
INRC2: 1. Thakur & Virender, 2. Wadia & Kunal, 3. Phillipos Matthai & Murthy PVS.
INRC3: 1. Jeet Jhabakh & V. Sekar, 2. Sheshank Jamwal & Aseem Sharma, 3. Chandan Gowda & Venu Rameshkumar.

Triple crown for Mantra Racing's Muddappa

CHENNAI: Hemanth Muddappa (Mantra Racing) claimed a triple crown in the third round of the MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Drag Racing Championship 2024 at the Madras International Circuit, here on Sunday.

Provisional results (winners only, all 4-Stroke unless mentioned): Unrestricted: Hemanth Muddappa (Mantra Racing) (08.110secs).
1051-1650cc (Super Sport): Hemanth (07. 970s).
851-1050cc (SS): Hemanth (08.006s).
551-850cc (SS): Mohammed Riyaz (08.407s).
361-550cc (SS Indian): Jason D'Souza (Mantra Racing) (12.136s).
166-225cc (SS): S. Prashanth (13.719).
Up to 165cc (SS Indian): V. Shashi Kiran (14.143s).
Girls (Stock 165cc): Jagathishree Kumaresan (One Racing) (16.781s).
2-Stroke (131-165cc, SS): Syed Imran (Fast Track Racing) (13.019).

LONG PENDING

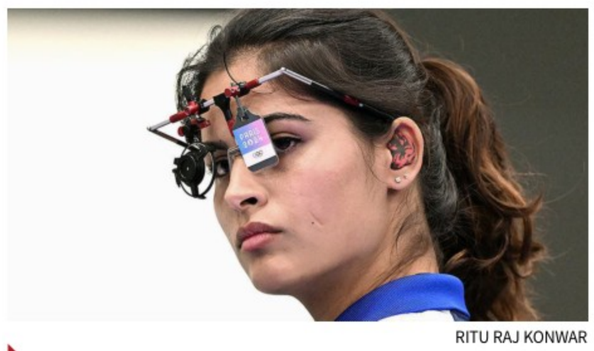
The feeling is surreal: Manu after winning India's first medal in Paris

RITU RAJ KONWAR

After winning a historic bronze medal on Sunday, ace Indian shooter Manu Bhaker said it was a "surreal" feeling. "The feeling is surreal. I feel so good and happy that I could win this medal for all of us. This is coming home after so long. I am very happy. Maybe, many more (medals) will come in the following days," said Manu.

HUGE ACHIEVEMENT

Every Indian is very proud, says head coach Suma Shirur



RITU RAJ KONWAR

The head coach of the Indian shooting contingent, Suma Shirur, said on Sunday that every Indian is very proud after Manu Bhaker's historic medal win at the ongoing Paris Olympics. "Every Indian is very proud... Manu won a medal and the entire outlook changes. It is huge," Suma Shirur said.

MOMENT TO CHERISH

Parents express delight after daughter's historic medal

RITU RAJ KONWAR

Ramkishan, Manu Bhaker's father, said his daughter reaped the rewards of hard work. "We are extremely happy and all of our friends are congratulating us. Her hard work has paid off, and Manu has finally done it," he said. "I thank you all for supporting her, and I hope you all will continue to bless her," said her mother Sumedha.

HAT-TRICK

A woman opens medal account for India at the Games yet again

RITU RAJ KONWAR

When Manu Bhaker opened India's account at the Paris Olympics, it was the third consecutive time that a woman won the first medal at the Games. Wrestler Sakshi Malik won the 58kg bronze at Rio in 2016 while weightlifter Mirabai Chanu clinched the 49kg silver in Tokyo. Manu bagged the bronze in the 10m air pistol individual event.

Gritty Manu's monumental achievement

The 22-year-old wins the country its first Olympic medal in shooting in 12 years, becomes the first Indian woman shooter to climb the podium; India off the mark in style in Paris

Red-letter day: Manu exorcised the ghosts of the Tokyo Olympics, where she did not make the final of any event, with a strong start to her Paris campaign. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Redemption arc

From the disappointment of Tokyo to the delight of Paris, life has come a full circle for Manu Bhaker.

MEDALS	G	B	S	TOTAL
Youth Olympic Games	1	0	0	0
World Championships	4	1	1	6
World Cup Final	4	0	0	4
World Cup	8	2	4	14
Junior World Cup	3	1	0	4
Asian Championships	3	1	0	4
Asian Games	1	0	0	1
Commonwealth Games	1	0	0	1

At the Tokyo Olympics, Manu finished 12th in 10m air pistol & seventh in mixed air pistol (with Saurabh Chaudhary) & 15th in 25m pistol.

MANU BHAKER

Born: February 18, 2002, Jhajjar, Haryana

World Rank: 10m air pistol: No. 26; 25m pistol: No. 69

Junior world record: 244.7 in 2019 in Putian, China (still stands)

- **Junior world champion** in air pistol in 2021, Lima, Peru
- **Youth Olympics champion** in air pistol in Buenos Aires in 2018

> I'll work with any athlete who gives a hundred percent. Manu gives 100% and I will give her 200%
>
> **RANA**

PARIS 2024

Jonathan Selvaraj
PARIS

Having shot two consecutive scores of 9.6 in her eighth and ninth shots of the 10m air pistol finals, Manu Bhaker slipped from inside the medal bracket to fourth place. She found herself behind Asian medallist Thu Vinh Trinh of Vietnam. She needed reassurance.

She knew exactly where to look, to the extreme left hand side of the viewing gallery. There sat a man with dark glasses and a notebook - her coach Jaspal Rana. He closed his fist and brought it to his chest and Manu understood immediately. She didn't need to look to him, she only needed to look within.

The cloud of nervousness passed. Manu turned back towards the target ten metres ahead of her. She lifted her pistol once again, aimed at the black dot in the centre of the target and fired – 10.3, the digital board above her beamed. It put her back in the medal bracket and she never left it again.

While Manu steadied herself, the others around her crumbled. Three-time World Cup gold winner Veronica Major was the first to fall. She was followed by Turkey's junior World champion Tarhan Sevval Ilayda. China's Asian Games champion Jiang Ranxin dropped out following three shots in the '8' point ring over four series. World Championship bronze medallist Li Xue exited right after. Finally it was Trinh's turn.

Barring the early blip, Manu cruised along and was even in silver medal position going into the final shot of the competition. She led by 0.1 at that point, but South Korea's Kim Yeji shot 10.5 to get ahead by the barest of margins.

It was only then that Manu cracked a wry smile – the first real bit of emotion she'd shown in a while – at what could have been. When she had her medal placed around her neck, she even wiped away a few tears. It didn't matter at this point. She'd already done more than enough to create history – winning India's first medal at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Course correction

A few weeks ago, a street dancing troupe held out a hat after their performance in front of two Indians having dinner at a cafe in Luxembourg. They had expected a few coins at most for their efforts. Instead their eyes bulged as a young woman emptied a stack of Euros into their makeshift bowl.

The slightly glum donor was Manu who was training in the European country ahead of the Olympic Games. The 22-year-old's generosity was an enforced one, part of a training method employed by the Rana, the other Indian at the table. It was designed to make sure she'd never let the intensity of training slip. It's a way to replicate – as much as possible – the stress Manu felt during a competition, in the otherwise inconsequential environs of a training hall.

> Krishna tells Arjun focus on your work, don't worry about the results tomorrow. So the same was going on in my mind
>
> **MANU**
> from a verse in Bhagavad Gita

As part of the system, Rana would set ambitious targets for his shooter. She would be given a target of say 582 (out of theoretically possible 600 in air pistol). The consequence of any shortfall is made up for with a fine. If she shot a 578, Manu would be paying a fine of €4 or whatever the local currency was. All the collected money was given to charity.

The margin of penalty increased closer to the Olympics. One Euro for every point missed became 10. Then 20.

Sometimes, no amount of training can help with the nerves that come stinging on the tournament eve. A day before her final, when Manu was battling the butterflies in her stomach, she revisited a verse in the Bhagavad Gita where Sri Krishna guides the Pandava prince Arjuna in his own moment of self doubt to focus on his duty.

Tough love

Manu wasn't always steely eyed and emotionless. Her equation with Rana not always as trusting. In contrast to the tears of joy she blinked away in Chateauroux, the last time she competed at the Olympics, she wept in frustration – as she competed and failed across three different events.

The Olympics – meant to be the highlight of the then 19-year-old's career – was anything but. There was no doubting her prodigious talent. At 16, she became the youngest Indian to win gold at the ISSF shooting World Cup and was soon winning World Cups and Commonwealth Games gold medals almost for fun. She also became one of the youngest to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.

Her impressive results had been achieved while training under Rana, a former two-time Olympian and one of the country's top pistol shooters in the 1990s and at the turn of the millennium, had helmed a highly successful Indian junior program. He had been Manu's coach ever since she made her international debut in 2018.

A disagreement over the makeup of the squad (Rana wanted Manu to focus on two events, she wanted to compete in three) was followed by court intrigues, the mother of all meltdowns, and falling outs that involved a heated phone call and Rana walking around New Delhi's Karni Singh shooting range in a t-shirt which had Manu's mother's last caustic message to him written on it.

In the years that followed Manu's debacle at Tokyo, her own form fluctuated. She failed to make the Indian team for the Asian Games where other shooters from India went on to win gold and silver. She says she became disillusioned with the sport. She started thinking about writing the civil services exam. Before that though, as part of a final effort in the middle of last year, she called up Rana once again. Although he admits he would probably not have reached out if he was in her position, he immediately agreed to work with her.

After Manu sealed bronze, Rana quietly made his way out of the finals range. He refused to take credit for Manu's achievement "She did this all on her own," he said. Both had tears in their eyes at the conclusion of the final on Sunday, but they know they aren't done just yet. After her medal ceremony, Manu headed right back to the practise halls to prepare for her next event – the qualifying round of the mixed team on Monday. She also has the women's 25m pistol events ahead of her. Rana believes she is capable of medalling in all of them.

Incredible feat

Heartiest congratulations to Manu Bhaker for opening India's medal tally with her bronze medal in the 10m air pistol shooting event at the Paris Olympics. Her feat is going to inspire many sportspersons, especially women
DROUPADI MURMU,
President

A historic medal! Well done, Manu Bhaker, for winning India's first medal at the Paris Olympics. This success is even more special as she becomes the first woman to win a medal in shooting for India. An incredible achievement!
NARENDRA MODI, PM

Congratulations Manu, you have displayed skill and dedication to become the first Indian woman shooter to win an Olympic medal
MANSUKH MANDAVIYA,
Sports Minister

It's incredible to witness your skill and determination, bringing pride to India with each shot. This achievement is a testament to your perseverance and determination. Keep shining, Manu!
ABHINAV BINDRA

As the first Indian woman to win in the 10 m air pistol at the Olympics and our youngest Indian shooter to do so, you've made history. I'm sure your success will inspire young athletes across India to dream big and give it their all.
NITA AMBANI

After overcoming the heartbreak in Tokyo, you have shown immense strength and determination to win a bronze at Paris 2024 and made India proud
SACHIN TENDULKAR

I am very happy. I told her to believe in herself. This is a very big achievement
PRATAP SINGH, Manu's uncle

We hoped for a gold medal but we are still happy. She is the youngest Indian woman to win a medal. She is very hard working. We hope in the remaining events she will clinch gold
BALJEET SINGH, Manu's uncle

INBRIEF

Nadal to face Djokovic in Olympics blockbuster

Rafael Nadal set up an Olympic Games blockbuster against old rival Novak Djokovic on Sunday, justifying his last-minute decision to play despite injury concerns. Nadal, who has won 14 of his 22 Grand Slam titles at Roland Garros, defeated Marton Fucsovics 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 in the first round despite sporting strapping on his injured right thigh.

Nagal exits Paris with a loss to Moutet in first round

Sumit Nagal stuck to his strong baseline game against a mercurial Frenchman Corentin Moutet, who knocked out the Indian with a 6-2, 2-6, 7-5 in a two-hour 28-minute contest on Sunday. It was Nagal's second appearance at the Olympic Games.

Biles makes a dazzling start despite an injury scare

Simone Biles made a stunning return to Olympic competition on Sunday, powering through left-calf pain to get her multiple-medal bid off to a rousing start. She led the vault and floor exercise standings and was second in balance beam.

GOLDIES

Lukas Maertens (Ger): Men: 400m freestyle.
Mallo Breton (Fra): Women: epee individual.
Oh Sanguk (Kor): Men: Sabre individual.
Xie Yu (Chn): Men: 10m air pistol.
Oh Ye Jin (Kor): Women: 10m air pistol.
Pauline Ferrand Prevot (Fra): Women: Cycling: Mountain Bike: cross-country.
Abe Hifumi (Jpn): Men: Judo: 66kg.
Diyora Keldiyorova (Uzb): Women: Judo: 52kg.
Yoshizawa Coco (Jpn): Women: Skateboarding: street.
Korea: Women team: Archery.
Jessica Fox (Aus): Women: Kayak Single.
Leon Marchand (Fra): Men: 400m individual medley.
Torri Huske (USA): Women: 100m freestyle.

GOING FOR GOLD

Artistic Gymnastics: Men's Team
Canoe Slalom: Men's Canoe Single
Cycling Mountain Bike: Men's Cross-country
Diving: Men's Synchronised 10m Platform
Equestrian: Eventing Team Jumping, Eventing Individual Jumping
Fencing: Women's Sabre Individual, Men's Foil Individual
Judo: Women's 57kg, Men's 73 kg
Shooting: 10m Air Rifle Women, 10m Air Rifle Men
Skateboarding: Men's Street
Swimming: Men's 200m Freestyle, Men's 100m backstroke, Women's 100m Breaststroke, Women's 200m Freestyle

Nikhat begins campaign with a hard-fought win over Kloetzer

The Indian boxer persists to secure a unanimous decision in her favour after being caught off-guard by the German's early aggression; Preeti makes a winning start with a victory over Vietnam's Vo Thi Kim Anh on Saturday

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

Two-time World champion boxer Nikhat Zareen survived a scare to begin her campaign with a hard-fought win in the Paris Olympics here on Monday.

The 28-year-old Indian got past Germany's Maxi Kloetzer 5-0 in a keenly-fought women's 50kg first round contest at the North Paris Arena.

Earlier, Preeti Pawar (54kg) had also made a winning start, beating Vietnam's Vo Thi Kim Anh 5-0 to enter the round of 16.

Nikhat, who entered the ring exactly when shooter Manu Bhaker confirmed India's first medal, was caught off guard with the shorter German's early aggression. Kloetzer moved in to land some stinging jabs and swift combinations to gain ground even as Nikhat managed a few counters before trailing 2-3 in the opening round.

Even as the German crowd out-shouted the Indians in supporting Kloetzer, the experienced Indian stepped up aggression and fought back in the second round. With the bout getting physical, the referee deducted points from both – Kloetzer for bending too much and Nikhat for clinching. Despite that, the Indian had a 2-0 lead going into the third round.

In the final three minutes, most of which went like a wrestling bout, Nikhat maintained an upper hand to secure a unanimous decision.

" I had not sparred with this opponent during our camp in Germany.

" I did not expect her to fight like this. I managed to change my plan and am happy to get a unanimous decision in my Olympic debut match.

"I was a little nervous. That happens with me in the first bout of every tournament. It helps me give my best," said Nikhat, while congratulating Manu for opening India's account.

Nikhat will take on top-seeded Chinese and Asian Games champion Wu Yu in the next round on Thursday.

Asian Games bronze medallist Preeti will meet Worlds silver medallist and Pan American Games champion Yeni Arias of Colombia on Tuesday.

Adapting swiftly: Kloetzer moved in to gain early ground, but Nikhat managed to change her plans and clinch a win in her Olympic debut. GETTY IMAGES

THE INDIA SHOW

A look at some of the Indian performances on Sunday:
Archery: Women's team quarterfinal: lost to Netherlands 0-6.
Badminton: Group stage: Women: Sindhu bt Nabaaha (Mdv) 21-9, 21-6; **Men:** Prannoy bt Roth (Ger) 21-18, 21-12.
Boxing: Women's 50kg (round-of-32): Nikhat bt Kloetzer (Ger) 5-0.
Rowing: Men's Single Sculls: Balraj (second in Repechage 2, enters quarterfinals).
Shooting: 10m Air Pistol: Women's final: Manu (Bronze).
10m Air Rifle: Women's qualification: 5. Ramita (qualifies for final), 10. Elavenil, Did Not Qualify (DNQ); **Men's qualification:** 7. Arjun Babuta (qualifies for final), 12. Sandeep, DNQ.
Swimming: Men's 100m backstroke: Srihari Nataraj (33rd overall), DNQ for semifinals;
Women's 200m freestyle: Dhinidhi Desinghu (23rd overall), DNQ for semifinals.
Table Tennis (round-of-64): Women: Sreeja bt Kallberg (Swe) 11-4, 11-9, 11-7, 11-8; Manika bt Hursey (GBr) 11-8, 12-10, 11-9, 9-11, 11-5; **Men:** Sharath Kamal lost to Kozul (Slo) 12-10, 9-11, 6-11, 7-11, 11-8, 10-12; Harmeet lost to Lebrun (Fra) 8-11, 8-11, 6-11, 8-11.
Tennis: Men (first round): Nagal lost to Moutet (Fra) 2-6, 6-2, 5-7.

INDIANS IN ACTION

A look at some Indian players/teams who will compete on Monday (all times IST):
Archery: Men's team quarterfinal (Dhiraj, Pravin, Tarundeep), 6.30 p.m.
Badminton: Group stage: Men: Doubles: Satwiksairaj & Chirag vs Lamsfuss & Seidel (Ger), noon; **Singles:** Lakshya vs Carraggi (Bel), 5.30 p.m.; **Women's doubles:** Tanisha & Ashwini vs Matsuyama & Shida (Jpn), 12.50 p.m.
Hockey: Men (Pool B): vs Argentina (4.15 p.m.).
Shooting: 10m Air Pistol mixed team qualification (Manu & Sarabjot, Rhythm & Arjun Cheema), 12.45 p.m.; **Trap: Men's qualification - Day 1** (Prithviraj), 1 p.m.
10m Air Rifle: Women's final (Ramita), 1 p.m.; **Men's final** (Arjun Babuta), 3.30 p.m.
Table tennis (session begins at 11.30 p.m.): Women (round-of-32): Sreeja vs Zeng (Sgp).

Below-par Indian women exit in the quarterfinals

Better show: On a disappointing day, Bhajan shone the best for the Indian women. AP

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

The Indian women's archery team, comprising Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Bhajan Kaur, performed below par to crash out in the quarterfinals of the Paris Olympics at the Invalides here on Sunday.

Without the support of Korean coach Baek Woong Ki, who was not given an accreditation for the Olympics, India, which got a first round bye, lost to the Netherlands 6-0 (52-51, 54-49, 53-48).

While unpredictable winds posed a challenge, the Indians' nervousness, apparent from their blinking eyes, shaking hands and the long time taken to shoot an arrow, compounded their problem.

"This was unexpected. They could not judge the wind properly, but you cannot have the same excuse every time as other archers also shot in similar conditions," said women's coach Purnima Mahato.

Sindhu shows her class, makes short work of Fatima

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

Double Olympic medallist shuttler P.V. Sindhu made short work of the lesser-known Fatima Nabaaha Abdul Razzaq of Maldives 21-9, 21-6 in a women's singles Group-M match at the La Chapelle Arena here on Sunday.

Living up to her reputation, Sindhu dispatched Fatima in less than half-an hour to begin her third Olympics journey in style.

The Indian and her opponent were a class apart and the scoreline reflected it. Sindhu displayed her fine array of shots to leave Fatima bamboozled. The Indian gave away some points because of errors at the line and the net, but the wayward Maldivian could not capitalise on it and lost the first game in 13 minutes.

The second game also continued in a similar way, as Fatima looked clueless against some of Sindhu's shots, before the Indian completed the formalities.

"It was a good start and I was getting used to the court, getting used to the atmosphere. Overall, the way I play has not changed, but there are some add-ons...initially I was a bit injured, so I was not moving really well on court," said Sindhu, who is being guided by the legendary Prakash Padukone.

"We worked on that, we worked on strokes, not only just net or defence, but I would say overall because when you come to a big tournament, you need to be at your 100 per cent in every stroke and every movement."

Sindhu will play Estonia's Kristin Kuuba in her next group engagement on Wednesday.

Facile win: Sindhu was hardly troubled by her Maldivian opponent Fatima in the opening round. PTI

Medals table

	Country	G	S	B	T
1	Australia	4	2	0	6
2	France	3	2	2	7
3	Japan	3	2	1	6
3	South Korea	3	2	1	6
5	China	3	1	2	6
6	USA	2	4	3	9
7	Kazakhstan	1	0	2	3
8	Belgium	1	0	1	2
9	Germany	1	0	0	1
9	Hong Kong	1	0	0	1
9	Uzbekistan	1	0	0	1
22	India	0	0	1	1

AROUND PARIS

Rower Balraj qualifies for quarterfinals

Rower Balraj Panwar qualified for the quarterfinals in men's rowing at the Paris Olympics on Sunday. India's sole representative in the event, Balraj, finished second in the repechage of men's single sculls by clocking 7:12.41s.

Swimmers Srihari and Dhinidhi bow out

India's swimming campaign at the Paris Games came to an end with both Srihari Nataraj and Dhinidhi Desinghu failing to progress to the semifinals of their respective events. Srihari finished joint-second in the slower heat with a timing of 55.01s but the 23-year-old was 33rd in the overall standing for the 100m men's backstroke event. The 16 fastest swimmers from the heats qualify to the semifinals.

India prevails over Sri Lanka in a rain-curtailed encounter

INDIA IN LANKA

Pranay Rajiv
PALLEKELE

It is uncommon for a cricket series to unfold in Sri Lanka without rain unsettling the proceedings in at least a game.

Sunday's second T20I here ensured the 'tradition' stayed true as India pipped Sri Lanka by seven wickets in a rain-disrupted match to seal the series 2-0.

India hunted down a DLS-adjusted 78-run target in just 6.3 overs, with Yashasvi Jaiswal, Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya stitching up the win with some flashy stroke play.

The game, which started nearly an hour late due to a wet outfield, was called to a halt in the first over of the Indian chase when the skies opened up.

The Indian openers returned to the middle just over an hour later, with Jaiswal restarting the chase by swatting Dasun Shanaka to the deep mid-wicket fence for a four.

Sanju Samson, who replaced an injured Shubman Gill, was caught off guard first ball by a quicker off-break from Maheesh Theekshana which disturbed his stumps.

But, skipper Suryakumar and Jaiswal employed the sweeps and the reverse sweeps to great effect to negate the Lankan spin threat of Theekshana and Wanindu Hasaranga, propelling India closer to the target.

This included a hat-trick of swept fours from Suryakumar against Theekshana.

The 33-year-old batter followed it up by audaciously flicking a fuller one from Matheesha Pathirana over deep fine leg's head.

The Lankan bowlers managed to dismiss both Jaiswal and Suryakumar. But in the end, it proved to be too little too late as India romped home easily.

Earlier, Sri Lanka endured another middle-order collapse to settle for what proved to be a subpar total of 161 for nine wickets.

Riding on a free-flowing fifty from Kusal Perera, Sri Lanka was well-placed at 130 for two at the 15-over mark after being inserted by Suryakumar. But much like in the series opener, where it lost its last nine wickets for 30 runs, the home side crumbled in the death.

Perera also had luck in his favour as he reached his fifty after he pulled a Hardik Pandya short ball into the hands of Rinku Singh, only for the Indian fielder to slip and slide into the boundary rider.

Hardik's bouncer ploy eventually bore fruit as he had Perera and Kamindu Mendis caught by Rinku at deep square leg, triggering the home side's collapse as it lost its last seven wickets for the addition of just 31 runs, with Ravi Bishnoi ending with a three-wicket haul.

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA

Pathum Nissanka lbw b Bishnoi 32 (*24b, 5x4*) , Kusal Mendis c Bishnoi b Arshdeep 10 (*11b, 2x4*), Kusal Perera c Rinku b Hardik 53 (*34b, 6x4, 2x6*), Kamindu Mendis c Rinku b Hardik 26 (*23b, 4x4*), Charith Asalanka c Samson b Arshdeep 14 (*12b, 1x6*), Dasun Shanaka b Bishnoi 0 (*1b*), Wanindu Hasaranga b Bishnoi 0 (*1b*), Ramesh Mendis st. Pant b Axar 12 (*10b, 1x6*), Maheesh Theekshana b Axar 2 (*3b*), Matheesha Pathirana (not out) 1 (*1b*); Extras (lb-1, w-10): 11; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 161.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-26 (Kusal Mendis, 3.3 overs), 2-80 (Nissanka, 9.3), 3-130 (Kamindu Mendis, 15.1), 4-139 (Kusal Perera, 15.6), 5-140 (Shanaka, 16.3), 6-140 (Hasaranga, 16.4), 7-151 (Asalanka, 18.4), 8-154 (Theekshana, 19.2), 9-161 (Ramesh Mendis, 19.6).

INDIA BOWLING

Siraj 3-0-27-0, Arshdeep 3-0-24-2, Axar 4-0-30-2, Bishnoi 4-0-26-3, Parag 4-0-30-0, Hardik 2-0-23-2.

INDIA

Yashasvi Jaiswal c Shanaka b Hasaranga 30 *(15b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Sanju Samson b Theekshana 0 *(1b)*, Suryakumar Yadav c Shanaka b Pathirana 26 *(12b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Hardik Pandya (not out) 22 *(9b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant (not out) 2 *(2b)*; Extras (lb-1): 1; Total (for three wkts. in 6.3 overs): 81.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-12 (Samson, 1.1), 2-51 (Suryakumar, 4.2), 3-65 (Jaiswal, 5.4).

SRI LANKA BOWLING

Shanaka 1-0-12-0, Theekshana 2-0-16-1, Hasaranga 2-0-34-1, Pathirana 1.3-0-18-1.

Toss: India; **PoM:** Bishnoi.
India won by seven wickets with nine balls remaining (DLS Method) to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in three-match series.
Third and final T20I: July 30, Pallekele, 7 p.m. IST.

Wrecker-in-chief: Bishnoi sent back Shanaka and Hasaranga for golden ducks in his impressive spell. AFP

EDUCATIONPLUS

A. Joseph Dorairaj

A pragmatic mix

While inputs from the industry are necessary, curriculum revision in higher education should look beyond making students job ready

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Curriculum revision is a welcome phenomenon. Both universities and colleges must revise and, if necessary, restructure their curriculum every two or three years. It is essential to keep abreast of the latest trends and challenges in every domain so that academic programmes and courses do not become obsolete.

But a few questions need to be answered. How often should the curriculum be revised? Should the revision be peripheral or substantial? Who decides what and how much should be revised? And with what rationale?

Not all questions are equally important. But the one about decision-makers warrants attention. In higher education institutes (HEIs), curriculum design and revision is initiated and overseen by individual departments and the institution's Academic Council at a higher level. The presence of external subject experts, an alumnus, and an 'industry' representative in the Board of Studies, which frames and revisits the curriculum periodically, is mandated in almost all institutions.

Higher education should empower students with critical thinking skills and a strong emotional, digital and ecological quotient. In the pursuit of gainful employment, liberal education should not be sidelined.

External subject experts ensure that the curriculum is updated and is on a par with the best in the field. The alumnus gives feedback in terms of what is good and what needs to be revised. Industry representatives comment on whether the curriculum makes students job-ready.

Conflicting opinion

However there are conflicting opinions on who engineers the changes and on what basis. While one group argues that the industry should play a key role in designing and revisiting the curriculum for all programmes across institutions, the other points out that curriculum revision and restructuring is the prerogative of educationists, not technocrats and that industry experts cannot dictate curriculum restructuring.

In recent times there has been an acrimonious battle between educationists and their industry counterparts on who should have the last word on curriculum revision.

The latter claim that a high percentage of graduates are not industry ready because the curriculum is not geared to meet job requirements. Their perspective is that the primary job of HEIs is to make students market-ready and employable.

Educationists, on the other hand, argue that, while they are willing to accommodate suggestions to ensure the graduates are certified job-ready, curriculum cannot be designed and restructured solely on the basis of market demand and prospects of employment.

If technocrats are allowed to have the last word on the design and restructuring of curriculum, what would be the ramifications?

One is the cold shouldering of the Humanities and Liberal Studies. If all our programmes and courses are aligned with market needs, placement would certainly improve. Institutions can boast of placement records and this will certainly enhance the demand and institutions will go up a few notches in terms of accreditation.

Beyond jobs

But higher education has another important mandate: to transform students into better human beings who will be empowered and responsible citizens. Therefore, it needs to be ensured that curriculum restructuring is not hijacked by non-academicians.

Recently in a meeting of the Board of Studies in English, which was convened to restructure the curriculum for M.A. English Studies, a technocrat wanted the programme to be reoriented to include skill-based courses like Journalism, Advertisements, Visual Communication, Translation, and Theatre Arts and demanded that conventional courses like Shakespeare, Linguistics and Phonetics, and Comparative Literature be replaced with employment-oriented courses. A similar scene played out in the department of History where the 'industry' representative replaced almost half the traditional courses with those related to tourism and hospitality with the argument that students should be made job ready.

The situation will, of course, be different in Engineering and Technology, which have to constantly reinvent themselves to stay relevant and help their graduates land secure jobs. Even there, the basics should not be forgotten and a dose of liberal education should be injected into the curriculum.

While inputs from the industry and market should be taken into consideration during curriculum design and restructuring, both educationists and technocrats should not focus only on jobs and salaries. Higher education should empower students with critical thinking skills and a strong emotional, digital and ecological quotient. In the pursuit of gainful employment, liberal education should not be sidelined.

Ultimately, what we need is a holistic education, which will ensure a healthy and pragmatic mix of information, knowledge, and skills.

The writer is Professor, School of English and Foreign Languages, Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed-to-be University), Gandhigram. Email: josephdorairaj@gmail.com

International Education Fair

The 20th edition of International Education Fair (IEF) organised by The Hindu Education Plus will be held from August 15 to August 30 across seven cities. This one-stop platform will bring delegates from consulates, top international universities, colleges, consultants and financial institutions to give comprehensive information on overseas education.

Students can interact with experts from global consultants and colleges and attend seminars and sessions on visa counselling and financial aid services.

When and Where:
August 15 at Taj Vivanta, Hyderabad;
August 17 at Taj Vivanta, Vijayawada;
August 19 at Christ University Central Campus, Bengaluru;
August 20 at Christ University Kengeri Campus, Bengaluru;
August 22 at Taj Vivanta, Coimbatore;
August 23 at Kumaraguru College of Technology, Coimbatore;
August 25 and 26 at Loyola College, Chennai;
August 28 at Taj Vivanta, Kochi;
August 30 at Dr. Ambedkar Convention Centre, Delhi.

To register, visit bit.ly/IEFTHEP2024 or scan the QR code

YI24

ThinkStartup and the Management Entrepreneurship Professional Skills Council (MEPSC), in association with the CBSE, have launched the fourth edition of Youth Ideathon (YI24). The five-stage competition will be held online initially and participants will be divided into Junior and Senior categories.

Eligibility: Students from Classes 4 to 12.

Theme: iStartup a Good Thing for India.

More details at www.youthideathon.in

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A BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Mohammedan Sporting holds Inter Kashi

I-League champion Mohammedan Sporting held Inter Kashi FC to a 1-1 draw in a Durand Cup Group B league match at the Kishore Bharati Stadium in Kolkata on Sunday.

The result: Group B: Mohammedan Sporting SC 1 (Ashley Koli 67) drew with Inter Kashi FC 1 (Nikola Stojanovic 38).
Group D: Jamshedpur FC 3 (Sanan Mohammad 45+2, 68, Imran Khan 86) bt Assam Rifles FT 0.

Russell disqualified, Hamilton wins

Mercedes teammates had finished 1-2 originally before latter's car was found to be underweight

BELGIAN GP

Reuters
SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Mercedes driver George Russell was disqualified and lost his Belgium Grand Prix win on Sunday, after his car was found to be underweight, and his teammate Lewis Hamilton promoted to first place.

The car was weighed on the FIA inside and outside scales with both showing the same result of 796.5kgs, 1.5kg below the minimum weight required and all other drivers move up one place in the classification.

Russell had led Hamilton home in a Mercedes one-two after he opted for a one-stop strategy. The decision means that McLaren's Oscar Piastri finishes second with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc in third.

Lucky break: Hamilton arrives for the podium ceremony. AFP

The results: 1. Hamilton (Mercedes); 2. Piastri (McLaren); 3. Leclerc (Ferrari); 4. Verstappen (Red Bull); 5. Norris (McLaren); 6. Sainz (Ferrari); 7. Perez (Red Bull); 8. Alonso (Aston Martin); 9. Ocon (Alpine); 10. Ricciardo (RB); 11. Stroll (Aston Martin); 12. Albon (Alpine); 13. Gasly (Alpine); 14. Magnussen (Haas); 15. Bottas (Stake F1); 16. Tsunoda (RB); 17. Sargeant (Williams); 18. Hulkenberg (Haas); DNF: Zhou (Stake F1); DSQ: Russell (Mercedes).
Standings: Drivers: 1. Verstappen 277; 2. Norris 199; 3. Leclerc 177; 4. Piastri 167; 5. Sainz 162. **Constructors:** 1. Red Bull Racing 408; 2. McLaren 366; 3. Ferrari 345; 4. Mercedes 266; 5 Aston Martin 73.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Priyadharshini scores four goals

S. Priyadharshini slammed four goals to power Kemp FC past Pink Panther FC in the KSFA Karnataka Women's League football.
The results: Kemp 9 (S. Priyadharshini 17, 28, 62, 67, R. Yuvarani 23, Mandala Anusha 74, Rivka Ramji 79, Aadira Ghosh 84, 89) bt Pink Panther 0; United FC Kodagu 2 (Radha Singh 7, Ayushi Malvi 39) bt Roots 1 (Rosy Thanga 55).

Mysore Dist. posts win

Mysore District defeated Vimanapura SC 51-31 in the State sub-junior under-13 boys' quarterfinal super league basketball.
The results: Quarterfinal super league: Boys: Mysore District 51 (Renish 14, Daniel 10) bt Vimanapura 31 (Aarush 14); MCHS 81 (Nishan 16, Atulya 16) bt HBR 42 (Arnav 22, Ritham 14); Yelahanka New Town 50 (Pranav 20) bt Devanga Union 18 (Suraj 10); PPC 62 (Suthij 18, Dheer 12) bt Mandya Dist. 21 (Chinmay 18).
Girls: Mandya District 39 (Varshini 10) bt Bangalore Sporting 28 (Pavithra 10); Mysore District 58 (Lahari 15) bt MCHS 21 (Livdeep 10); Young Orion's 50 (Linisha 29, Miraya 12) bt YMMA 28 (Shreeya 10); Beagles 56 (Spandana 18) bt Bangalore Vanguards 26 (Siri 12).

LIVE TELECAST

Olympics 2024: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 11 a.m. onwards.
Football: Durand Cup, Sony LIV, 7 p.m.

Siddharth should make amends in Anab E Shahi Plate

HYDERABAD: The four-year-old gelding Siddharth, who ran second in his last start, should make amends in the Anab E Shahi Plate, the chief event of the Monday's (July 29) races.

1 KOTHAGUDEM PLATE (Div. II) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 12.45 p.m.: 1. Winning Attitude (3) Afroz Khan 60.5, 2. Classy Dame (8) Md. Ekram Alam 59.5, 3. Indian Temple (5) Surya Prakash 59, 4. N R I Ultrapower (10) Abhay Singh 59, 5. Sucker Punch (6) G. Naresh 57, 6. Master Touch (2) Mohit Singh 54, 7. Exponent (7) R.S. Jodha 53.5, 8. Wandring Warrior (4) Rafique Sk. 51.5, 9. Desert Sultan (1) P. Sai Kumar 50 and 10. Silver Arrow (9) P. Ajeeth Kumar 50.
1. CLASSY DAME,
2. N R I ULTRAPOWER,
3. INDIAN TEMPLE

2 ROYSTON ROCK PLATE (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II) – 1.15: 1. Aashritha Pet (6) G. Naresh 56, 2. Country's Maximus (3) Abhay Singh 56, 3. Flying Fury (8) Md. Ismail 56, 4. Golden Unicorn (13) P. Sai Kumar 56, 5. Leo (10) Mohit Singh 56, 6. Lifes Journey (7) Suraj Narredu 56, 7. Secret Option (11) Shivansh 56, 8. Torchbearer (12) Ashad Asbar 56, 9. Cape May (5) Md. Ekram Alam 54.5, 10. Grey Sky (15) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 11. Lady Jane (2) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 12. Lucky Fiero (4) Rafique Sk. 54.5, 13. Mikimoto (1) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 54.5, 14. Mountain Touch (14) Neeraj 54.5 and 15. Peppi (9) Surya Prakash 54.5.
1. LADY JANE,
2. LIFES JOURNEY,
3. TORCHBEARER

3 WWW.HYDRACES.COM CUP (Div. II) (1,100m) 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 1.45: 1. Delhi Heights (9) M. Mark 62.5, 2. Minecraft (10) Surya Prakash 62, 3. Gretsy (1) Shivansh 61, 4. Garnet (2) A.A. Vikrant 57.5, 5. Divine Connection (7) Md. Ekram Alam 55.5, 6. First Class (4) Mohit Singh 55.5, 7. Splendour On Grass (6) Santosh Raj 55.5, 8. Lashka (5) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 9. Glorious Power (3) Afroz Khan 53 and 10. Fashion Icon (8) Arjun 50.
1. GRETSY,
2. LASHKA,
3. GLORIOUS POWER

4 FIRECREST PLATE (Div. II) (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 2.15: 1. Briar Ridge (7) A.A. Vikrant 60, 2. Mark My Day (9) R.S. Jodha 60, 3. Fly Tothe Stars (8) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 58, 4. Devils Magic (4) Akshay Kumar 57, 5. Barbet (2) Neeraj 56, 6. Brooklyn Beauty (6) G. Naresh 52.5, 7. Only My Way (10) Afroz Khan 52.5, 8. Sopranos (1) Md. Ismail 52.5, 9. Fortunatus (3) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 52 and 10. Role Model (5) Abhay Singh 51.
1. DEVILS MAGIC,
2. BARBET,
3. FLY TOTHE STARS

5 WWW.HYDRACES.COM CUP (Div. I) (1,100m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 – (Cat. II) – 2.50: 1. Blissful (10) Md. Ekram Alam 62.5, 2. The Thunder (3) Rafique Sk. 62.5, 3. Australia (6) Deepak Singh 61, 4. Midsummer Star (4) P. Sai Kumar 59.5, 5. Clefairy (11) M. Mark 57, 6. Happy Go Lucky (1) Akshay Kumar 56.5, 7. Coming Home (2) Surya Prakash 56, 8. Exclusive Luck (9) Md. Ismail 54.5, 9. Only The Brave (7) Abhay Singh 54, 10. Indian Sniper (8) Mohit Singh 53.5 and 11. Shadow Fax (5) Likith Appu 53.5.
1. COMING HOME,
2. HAPPY GO LUCKY,
3. INDIAN SNIPER

6 FIRECREST PLATE (Div. I) (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 3.20: 1. Bangor On Dee (3) M. Mark 60, 2. D Minchu (8) Akshay Kumar 59.5, 3. True Icon (6) Shivansh 59.5, 4. Divine Destiny (9) Ashad Asbar 57, 5. Armstrong (10) Suraj Narredu 56, 6. Top In Class (7) Surya Prakash 54, 7. Wallop And Gallop (2) P. Ajeeth Kumar 53, 8. Just Incredible (1) Rafique Sk. 52, 9. Nucleus (5) Mohit Singh 52 and 10. Power Ranger (4) Md. Ekram Alam 50.5.
1. WALLOP AND GALLOP,
2. D MINCHU,
3. POWER RANGER

7 FALAKNUMA CUP (1,600m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 3.50: 1. Voice Of A Dream (3) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 60, 2. Carnival Lady (4) Shivansh 59, 3. Park Lane (5) Md. Ismail 59, 4. Exclusive Spark (2) Mohit Singh 58.5, 5. Caraxes (10) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 58, 6. Sugar (8) B.R. Kumar 58, 7. White Pearl (9) Akshay Kumar 58, 8. Assured Success (7) Surya Prakash 57, 9. London Bell (6) Md. Ekram Alam 53.5 and 10. Planet Super (1) Rafique Sk. 52.5.
1. WHITE PEARL,
2. VOICE OF A DREAM,
3. SUGAR

8 ANAB E SHAHI PLATE (1,400m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 80 and above (Cat. I) – 4.20: 1. Candy Girl (1) Md. Ekram Alam 62, 2. Huntingdon (3) Suraj Narredu 62, 3. Ashwa Morocco (5) Shivansh 61.5, 4. Siddharth (8) Akshay Kumar 60.5, 5. Akido (4) R.S. Jodha 60, 6. Mysterious Angel (11) P. Ajeeth Kumar 60, 7. Malaala (10) Arjun 59, 8. Ashoka (6) Sandesh 56.5, 9. Ramiel (2) Abhay Singh 52.5, 10. Baisa (7) Surya Prakash 50, 11. Ruby Red (9) Neeraj 50.
1. SIDDHARTH,
2. HUNTINGDON,
3. ASHWA MOROCCO

9 KOTHAGUDEM PLATE (Div. I) (1,200m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 4.50: 1. Pinatubo (10) Surya Prakash 60.5, 2. Crimson Rose (1) Shivansh 60, 3. Silver Lining (6) M. Mark 59.5, 4. Ambitious Star (4) Md. Ekram Alam 59, 5. N R I Fantasy (5) Likith Appu 58.5, 6. Royal Pal (3) R.S. Jodha 55.5, 7. Sadiya (9) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 53, 8. Inderdhanush (7) Md. Ismail 52, 9. Star Cruise (2) Dharshan Antony 51 and 10. Jet Falcon (8) Abhay Singh 50.
1. CRIMSON ROSE,
2. SADIYA,
3. ROYAL PAL
Day's Best: **SIDDHARTH**
Jackpot: (I) 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, (ii) 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9.
Mini Jackpot: (I) 2, 3, 4 & 5. (ii) 6, 7, 8 & 9.
Treble: (I) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 4, 5 & 6, (iii) 7, 8 & 9. Tanala: All races.

OFF THE EDGE
Nandini Raman

Build relationships

Uncertain about your career options? Low on self-confidence? This column may help

I am doing the five-year LLB but am not sure if I want to be a lawyer or judge. I would like to be in the corporate sector. What should I do for that?
Sivani

Dear Sivani,

To move to the corporate sector, you will need to acquire specialised knowledge on corporate and business law and understand business and management. Gain practical experience by interning at corporate law firms, legal departments, and corporations to acquire hands-on experience and insights into corporate legal practice. Find mentors and build relationships with experts in the corporate sector to gain insights, advice, and guidance on career pathways and opportunities. Develop transferable skills like communication, negotiation, and presentation to effectively tender legal advice, solutions, and recommendations to corporations, clients, and stakeholders. Strengthen your analytical, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills to analyse complex issues, evaluate risks and implications, and develop effective strategies and solutions. Some career options are being a corporate lawyer, an in-house legal counsel, a legal consultant or advisor, a compliance officer, a corporate secretary, a business development or corporate affairs manager.

I am 21 and have finished my B.A. History (Hons). I want to research social issues and also support my family financially. If I opt for M.A. Sociology, even after JRF, it doesn't pay very well. What should I do? Apoorva

Dear Apoorva,

Start by enhancing your skills and knowledge base. Develop your analytical and critical thinking skills to research social issues, analyse data and information, and develop useful insights and recommendations. Improve your technical skills in data analysis, data visualisation, research methodologies, and research tools and software. Gain practical hands-on experience and exposure via internships and volunteering opportunities across research projects in NGOs, research organisations, government agencies, media companies, and market research companies. Network and build relationships with professionals, researchers, and experts in the fields of social research, sociology, and related fields. Explore flexible part-time jobs and opportunities in research, analysis, content writing, and related fields across NGOs, research organisations, media companies, market research companies, freelance research, consulting opportunities in social research, market research, policy analysis, and content writing to gain experience, build a portfolio, and generate income while pursuing further studies and qualifications. Some career options are being a research analyst or associate in NGOs or research organisations, policy analyst or researcher in the government or public sector, content writer or researcher in media or publishing, market research analyst or associate or social media analyst or researcher.

I finished B.Sc. Life Sciences in 2019. I took the UPSC exam twice but didn't qualify. I am taking a third shot. I am not interested in academics. What are my options?
Ruhy

Dear Ruhy,

There are various opportunities in the private sector for Life Science graduates such as clinical research associate, medical writer, biotechnologist, sales and marketing professional, or healthcare consultant. You can join the healthcare and pharma sector as a medical representative, administrator or a pharmacovigilance specialist.

You can also be a health educator or a programme coordinator across NGOs and non-profits.

With additional training in data analysis and bioinformatics, you can also be a bioinformatics analyst. Identify what would you like to do and then acquire additional skills and certifications in areas like clinical research, medical writing, healthcare management and so on.. You can also consider private tutoring or conduct training sessions and workshops across institutes and organisations.

You can also freelance as a content writer or provide consultancy services to organisations in the healthcare and biotech sectors.

Disclaimer: This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com with the subject line Off the Edge

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